F.T. of JESUS.

[illegible] the SAINT! See the Dark HOLLOW Shines!
[illegible] CHAINS how *Brilliant*, Under these Confines!
[illegible] SUFFERING MARTYRS, Torn by TYRANTS Rage
[illegible] SAVIOURS Cause Their Pains Asswage.

[illegible] Heighten Rapt-rather [illegible]

THE SUFFERINGS OF THE SON of GOD *Manifest in the Flesh.*

Written Originally In *Portugueze*, by *Father Thomas of Jesus*, Of the Holy Order of The Hermits of St. *Augustin*: Afterwards Translated into *French*; And Now Done into *English*.

The Second Volume.

By *R. WELTON*, D. D.

Behold The Lamb of God which taketh Away The Sin of The World! St. John 1. 29.

LONDON:

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AN
Apologetical PREFACE.

IT *would be a Matter very Difficult To Fish Out Any just Excuse for the Appearance, of* This Second Volume, *So many Months after it was Proposed, Especially Considering with what Haste* The First *was Gone, Insomuch that it might be Said to* Vanish, *Rather than be Sold off; Had I not, not only, what is very Sensible to my Self, but what must Affect the Unprejudic'd Reader, to offer, in my Behalf; But when the Worthy Encouragers, of This Useful Work, shall Know the* Very *Reasons of Its Delay, I Trust, There will be no Need of any Farther Justification.*

To them, Therefore I Appeal; And to that Good Disposition, among them, with which the First Part *of* This Translation *was so Generously Received; And so Universally, I Bless God, Approv'd of; Assuring them that the Copy was Complete, and even the whole Impression Finish'd, and Printed off within Six or Seven Sheets, above Eight Months past, when I was forc'd away from* That, *and all Things Else, and Close Confin'd and Under the Peril of my Life, thro' the Means of a Wretch, who first Robb'd me of what He Could, and then, Attempted to* Shed my Blood *by* False *and* Execrable Information.

How Invincible is That Almighty Providence *that, Still, Protects the Innocent! And shelters them from Abandon'd Prostitutes and their Abetters!*

The Goodness of God Deliver'd me from the Malice of This Informing *Miscreant! And I Take this Occasion to Return Acknowlegement, for the Treatment, I met with, Under that Dispensation,*

from

from A Gentleman, who Acted, AS SUCH, *In all his Concerns Over me, During my Confinement; which I cannot but Look upon, as the Result of* THAT HUMAN DISPOSITION, *In A present Minister of State, by whose Warrant I was Seiz'd, whose Face I never, yet, Saw; And, In Truth, felt but Little of his Hand, Considering the Circumstances of my, Then, Condition; But he has Shewn many, the Difference Between Two Administrations, which may possibly, Sometime, Call for the* MERITS *of a* REMEMBRANCE!

But the Least Degree of PAIN *is* Pain *still! And to be actual under the Inquisition of any Government is a Passive State: I'm sure, I felt this to my Cost; It Finished my Ruin; It Quite Exhausted me, and sent me into a Foreign Land to Seek for Bread: For it is Infinitely more Eligible, to a Generous mind, to stoop down to the Meanest Offices, for Subsistence; To Look upon no Employment (however Inferiour, and Low) Beneath its Notice, Rather than*

to Live a Drone, and be an Incumbrance *to the World!*

'Twas this Call'd me Beyond the Seas, Choosing any Difficulty and Hazard of an active Life, so that it were just and Honest, whereby to Disengage my Self from the Sordid State *of* DEPENDANCE *upon any Creature, Rather than to sit down* In silence, *Bound* Hand and Foot, *and* Dumb!

I was certain to meet with Nothing, in the most Savage place, nor amidst the Damps and Foggs of a Certain Neighbourhood, under the Fatigues of a Vagabond Integrity, Like to what my Dear Redeemer has undergone for my Sake! And whenever matters press'd hard upon me, it was but Turning Over a few Leaves of this Second Volume, to be Convinc'd, that no Afflicted, distressed Soul, Could be Attack'd by more Relentless Barbarians than those Malicious, Harden'd, Jews, *who Depriv'd him of his Honour, Revil'd his Innocence, and Robb'd him of his Life!*

It is a hard Task upon me, here, to forbear

forbear Prefacing upon this Ensuing Volume, tho' it would be an Affront to the Dignity of the Subject, to pretend to an Encomium by way of Recommendation to it! Let the most Harden'd Sinner, but See, after what manner, he was Redeemed! *Let him, but Lend an Ear to the* Opprobrious Language, *of those Revilers! Let him but Observe the Fetches of their False Accusations, and Reproach! Let him but view the Rodds distilling with his Saviours Blood! Let him but Behold the Livid Bruises upon his Sacred Countenance! To proceed no Farther, Let him but Read this Book which is but a Preface to what is still to Come, and All Else, will be Superfluous; All that can be Said, in its Behalf, flat, and Insipid, Lifeless, and discolour'd to the Original of Such a Picture!*

But to Return to my Apology, Don't Wonder, Gentle Reader, at this Delay! Since it was my Misfortune, my hard Fate, not my Fault that this Long Finish'd Copy has been so Long Detain'd from Thee; I Could Mention Other

Difficulties, But I shall Stop here, because I've no more Room; Only beg the Favour of One Word with that Most Ingenious and Learned * Gentleman, *who Once Challeng'd me with a Severe Impeachment upon the Whole Reverend Body of my Brethren*; ' as if we had ' always shamefully perverted, the ' Sense and meaning of their Au- ' thors whenever we took them in ' Hand; *Therefore Let me here put in my Rejoynder, and Assure him, that, tho' in some things we Differ in Opinion, yet* Be it Known unto him, by these Presents, *that there is Such a One as* A Clergyman, of the Church of England, *who dares, and has Undertaken One of the Authours of his Communion, and done him Justice; Meaning, Courteous Reader, his and yours, and Every True and Faithful Christian.*

*Mr. D—

Decem. 14. 1720.

His Humble Servant.

R. W.

THE Fourteenth Instance OF THE SUFFERINGS OF Our BLESSED SAVIOUR.

CHAP. XIV.

In The Obligation He was Under of Conversing with Mankind, Whose Manners Were so Contrary to his Own.

HUNGER and Thirst after Righteousness is frequently Attended with Another Affliction very Sensible and Grievous to The Servants of God; which is to Live among Persons whose Manners and Conduct are Extremely Different from their Own: And, Yet, They Cannot Avoid Them Because The Love of Jesus Christ Presses Them, I.

Them To Make Him Known, Beloved, And Obey'd by All The World: They have a Lively Sense of The Obligation that Lies upon them to Labour for the Salvation of Their Neighbour; And How Ungrateful It would be to Refuse That Duty which They Owe to Their Redeemer: So that, seeing in what Forgetfulness of God Men Lead their Lives, on the one Hand; And How They are Glu'd to The World, and what Numberless Transgressions They Are, Daily, Guilty of, On The Other; It Cuts Them to The Heart, and Pierces Them into The Very Soul! But Never Was There any Sorrow, Comparable to That of Our Blessed Saviour, Upon This Account: This it was that Made Him Conceal His Majesty; And Choose a Mean and Ordinary State of Life; To Make No Manner of Appearance, In The World; But to Mix among The Common Herd of Men.

It was in a Poor, and Humble Cottage that he Liv'd; Open, and Expos'd to The View of all The World; To Set an Example, to all Mankind, of an Innocent, Modest, Regular, And Quiet Life; Under an Entire Submission to the Law of God, Without Discovering That Majesty and That Divine Wisdom, In The Plenitude, and Fullness that was in Him: He Dwelt In Silence, Because The Time of His Preaching, and Working Miracles Was not Yet Come; There was Little Notice Taken of His Person; Very Little Regard paid to His Inimitable Sanctity, and Holiness; Because He was Lookt upon but as an Ordinary and Common Man: But He was Sensibly Touch'd with the Extravagancy and Maliciousness, the Quarrels, and Violences, and Injustice, And Falsehoods, and Blas-

Blasphemies; And the Libertinism of The Jewish Nation: It was With An Extreme Torment, and Exceeding Grief, that He Beheld The Ambition of the Great; The Hypocrisie that Prevail'd Even among the Priesthood; The Vanity of the Doctors of The Law: The Avarice of The Magistrates; The Oppression of The Innocent, the Grinding of the Poor; The Pride of the Rich; The Contempt of Vertue, And of Truth; And the Universal Forgetfulness of God, and the Neglect of Their Salvation.

'Tis Impossible for a Man to Imagin What The Majesty of His Divine Person Underwent amonst So many Brutish, and Rude Men! What a Piercing Affliction It was to His Sanctity, to Converse with a Generation So Vicious and Profane! How It Kindled And Set His Zeal on Fire, to See How God, His Father's House was Blasphem'd Amidst a Nation So Generally Profligate and Licencious In Abomination! In a Word, All The Divine Perfections of The Blessed Jesus, Conspir'd to Torment Him; And all The Wicked Extravagances, that Were Transacted Before His Eyes, Were So many Stabs and Gashes with which They Pierc'd His Heart! He Could have Sav'd Himself, from the Agonies of These Melancholly Objects, by Retiring, as St. *John* The Baptist did, Into the Wilderness; But, The Merciful Design of His Coming Into the World, Being to Save Mankind, who Live In a Community, He Contented Himself, to Satisfie the Christian World, that was to Succeed, that He Approv'd a Recluse Life; by the Forty Days that He Devoted to Solitude and Fasting; 'till The Holy Ghost should, Afterwards, by His II.

Divine

Divine Illapses, Consecrate This Religious way of Life, by the Institution and Practice of many Eminent Saints, and Servants of God; And, for Himself, He made Choice of the Common Class and Station of Life, Because He had more Opportunities to Suffer for us Therein; And Was to be the Guide and Pattern to the Whole World.

But, It seems, That by this Publick and Sociable Life which the Blessed Jesus led on Earth, His Gracious Purpose was to Inform us, in a Particular Manner, in Three Things: First, The Method of Improving Our selves by Conversation. Secondly, The Soft and Compassionate Tenderness with which we ought to Bear our Neighbour's Failings. And, Last of all, The Courage and Unshaken Steadiness, with which we ought to Resist their Ill Examples, and to Pity and Despise their False and Rash Censures, and Wrong Judgments.

There are some General Rules, in the Holy Scriptures, concerning the first of These Instructions: The Blessed Jesus Himself Established One, when He said, * *Let Your Light So Shine Before Men, That They may See Your Good Works, And Glorify Your Father which is In Heaven.* He would have us live open to the whole World, with such Inoffensive Simplicity and Circumspection, as never to Transgress or Trespass against the Law of God; Quite Contrary to the Practise of some Sort of People, who, in Private, and in their Hearts cannot but Approve of the Principles of Religion, But Act the Libertine in the Face of the World, least they should Appear Singular, and Precise, And meet with the Reflections of a Wicked World: It is to these

* St. Mat. 5, 16.

Loose

Loose and Two-face'd Christians that the Blessed Jesus has declared, That: * *He will Be Ashamed of Them Before His Father, who are Ashamed of Him Before Men.* As He will Recompence and Glorifie His faithful Servants, in the Sight of All the World, At the Last Judgment; He, Also, Requires, And That with the Utmost Justice, That They should Confess, and Glorifie Him upon Earth. * St. Mark 8. 38.

It is not Sufficient for a Man to mean Well, But He must shew His Faith by the Testimony of his Good Works, that the World may not be Scandaliz'd; For † *Woe to That Man by Whom the Offence Cometh; It were Better for Him, that a Millstone were Hanged about His Neck; And He Cast into the Bottom of the Sea:* Our Blessed Saviour Requires This of us, That we should be Exemplary in our Lives; not out of a Principle of Vain Glory, or to Become Popular in the World; But that we may, Thereby, be Instrumental to Promote the Honour of Almighty God, without which we cannot Bear any Fruit, more than the Branch that dries up and withers when it is Cut off from the Body of the Vine; And is then Good for Nothing but to be Burnt. † St. Luke 17. 1, 2.

The Blessed Apostle St. *Paul* Gives us Another Rule, which is To ‖ *Owe No Man Any Thing, But to Love One Another; For, He that Loveth Another hath Fulfilled the Law.* By these Words He Instructs us in that Holy Liberty, and Christian Independance, in which we Ought to Converse among Mankind; not by following the Dictates of our own Humours, but the Suggestions of our Duty! For when a Man Acts only as His Fancy Leads Him, without any Regard to Those among whom He lives; He will, one ‖ Rom. 13. 8.

Way

Way or other, give them a just Occasion of Offence, which will Throw Him Into a Necessity of making Restitution; And, by that means Infringe that Christian Liberty, He possess'd Himself In Before.

This Rule also Teaches us, How we ought to manage In the Point of Friendship: In which, Particular Care Must be Taken, not to Stretch upon Ones Conscience to Indulge the Failings of a Friend: For, the Tendereſt Soothings and Complaisance that Naturally Result from these Ties, Change Into a Vice, Unless the Foundation of Them is Laid, In the Two Tables, Having God for Its Author, and its Limits Extend no farther than the Generous Principle of Charity to Our Neighbour. In Respect to The First of These; The Laws of God Must Regulate our Friendship, Without any Human Regard, In any Occasion whatsoever; And Then, Let This Noble Vertue Expand, and Enlarge Itself Into a Perpetual Desire of doing Good, In Imitation of That Bountiful Creator, from whose Goodness and Charity, the whole Universe was Created and Still Subsists.

If Our Capacity is but Narrow, Let us Make it up In Good Will; And be the More Industrious to find out Opportunities of doing Good; Rather than Pretend and Plead Excuses for our Unconcern; For, by This Means, we shall Demonstrate that We are The Genuin Offspring of our Heavenly Father, who is The Original Author of all Good: In a Word, Let us be, to all The World, what We would Wish Them to be to us; doing all The Offices of Kindness to Them, In Whatsoever we Can Assist or Help Them, by Word or Work, and that, not So

Much

Much In Respect to Any Quality of their Persons, as the Circumstances and Necessities of Their Condition.

As for what Relates to the Choice of Our Conversation, The Holy Apostle Absolutely forbids us so much as to * *Eat with the Wicked*, Unless it be with A Design to do Them Good, for fear of Imitating, or Giving Way to Their Evil Practices: But, if A Zeal for their Salvation obliges us To Converse with Them, Charity will point out to us the proper Time, and Opportunity to do it in, without Prejudice To our Selves, or Giving any Just Scandal To our Neighbours: In Respect to Familiarity, We must Avoid That among such Persons, as much as 'tis Possible; and, Chuse none but such as are of the same Vertuous Disposition with our Selves, for our Companions; If we Can find none upon this Level with us, all that we have to do is to Behave our selves with Civility, Candour and Affability To Every Body, But to be Familiar with none. Those we Advise with for Our Conduct, Ought to be Persons of Secrecy and Prudence, Well-meaning, and Capable of Distinguishing Our Real Wants; Looking upon our Welfare, or Misfortunes as Their Own; Powerful In Recommending Vertue To Our Choice, and by their own Example to Enforce their Advices to Our Approbation. VI.

* 1 Cor. 5. 11.

But, Because there are many Opportunities and Temptations of Offending Almighty God, In the Common Course of Life, as well as of Doing Good in the World; He, who Converses among Mankind, must, above all Things, take Particular Care, that His Conversation be pure and Inoffensive; For then God will not

Fail

Fail to Enlighten him with such a Measure of the Divine Grace, as shall be sufficient to Direct and Guide him, In his Way, safe and free from Danger In Respect to Himself; And prosper His Endeavours to His Neighbour's Profit and Advantage: Let such also Guard Themselves, against a very frequent, but Mistaken Notion, by which many are Seduced, who persuade themselves, That the Practice of Vertue, and The Exercises of Piety are Incompatible with an Active Life; And, therefore, Put-off the Reformation of their Life to a Time of Rest and Solitude, which they may, perhaps never meet with: This is an usual Put-off, Commonly Suggested by Our Depraved Nature, which is always Inventing Excuses to shake off the Yoak of Vertue: And Experience tells us how very Dangerous and fatal This Illusion Is; And that He, whose Principles don't stand fast to Him in Every Place and Circumstance, has, in Truth, no Principles or Religion at All.

If therefore, Thou would'st one Day Travel with Success, in Thy Sacred Pilgrimage, when Thou shalt think fit to Withdraw from the World, and Retire, In Order to Thy More Spiritual Advances; Neglect Not, *Now*, The Business of Religion amidst the Hurries of the World, with which at present Thou art Embarrast; God calls for our Service under every Circumstance of our Life; And there is not a Moment that we Breath in, for which we shall not render Him a most Strict Account: The Blessed Jesus, who is our Model and Example, has made no Distinctions; He was Ever attentive of His Father's Will, whilst He Convers'd

with

with Mankind. So Pure and Unblemishable was His Conversation, that * *He Defied His Enemies to Convince Him of Any Sin*: And Nothing was Ever to be more admired than His Temperance, Moderation, Softness, and Affability; His Calm of Soul, and Circumspection of Life, and All other Instances of a Compleat and Perfect Sanctity, In the midst of a Perverse and Restless Geneneration, with whom He did Follow, from the Multitude Even to the Desert. * St. John 8. 46.

Let every True Christian, then, and Faithful Servant of God Recollect Himself, amidst that Intercourse and Variety of Affairs He must Needs meet with In the World; And Remember, according to the Example of the Blessed Jesus, to Preserve the Life of the Inner Man; To pay a constant Regard to the God that made Him, and Maintain and be Faithful and Steady In the Practise of all Vertues: For, the Natural and most Proper Consequence of the Most Exemplary Works of The Blessed Jesus, when we reflect upon Them, with a Design to make Them our Pattern, is to Transfer and Communicate to Our Own That Brightness, Harmony, Powerfulness, and Sanctity, which were so Visible and Compleat In His.

By His Holy and Illustrious Example, We Learn also, How to Bear with the Infirmities and Faults of Those among whom we Live: For it is of Him The Holy Prophet has declared, that † *He shall not Cry, Nor Lift up, Nor Cause His Voice to be Heard in the Street*: He perceiv'd and saw many Distempers and Irregularities in The Community where He Liv'd; And was V. † Isa. 42. 2.

very ſenſably Touch'd with Them; And yet He kept Silence, He held His Peace, Becauſe His Time was not Come for Him to Regulate, and put an End to Them.

It is a Great Vertue to Know how to Suffer and Not Complain; Without This 'tis Impoſſible for any One to be Inwardly at Eaſe; which is abſolutely neceſſary, whilſt one is Obliged to hold Intercourſe with Thoſe whoſe Manner, Circumſtances and Ways of Life Differ from our own; For Mankind, for the moſt Part, cannot Endure to be Contradicted; Either Becauſe They think that which pleaſes Themſelves cannot be Ungrateful or Diſagreeable to others, or Becauſe even the moſt Juſt and Moderate Reproof offends the Nicety of their Pride. To ſee and perpetually to Diſſemble, and Overlook that which One cannot Approve, but, In Reaſon muſt Condemn, is one of the moſt Vexatious and Perplexing Torments of One's Life; And particularly, to Good and Pious Men, when God Attaches 'em to Himſelf, and by the Communication of His Holy Spirit, Raiſes their Souls above the ſordid Elements of this Sublunary World; and the Groſs and Viler Objects of Fleſh and Blood: What Great Concern and Care Wracks the Spirit of a faithful Servant of God, at ſuch a Time, that He may Become All Things to all Men, to gain and recover Their Souls: His Life, which is ſo much Reverſe to that of Sinful Men, oftentimes provokes Them to revile Him, and Excites a Spirit in Them, of Contempt and Perſecution. But let theſe Trials be never ſo ſevere, Let Them not make Him change his Conduct, but reſt ſatisfied that the Devils who ſet theſe their Inſtruments on Work,

Work, Raiſe not theſe Storms on any other Account, but to ſhake the moſt Holy Reſolution, and at laſt to prevail with him to Quit his Sacred Enterpriſe, and Give Way to the Temptation.

Therefore We muſt always, eſpecially at ſuch Times, Betake Ourſelves to Our Bleſſed Saviour, Beſeech Him, without Ceaſing, for His Enlightening Grace; that we may not Loſe the Intrinſick Value of Religion; We muſt Arm our Souls with Perſeverance and Conſtancy, and reſolve never to give over in the Works of God; We muſt Humble Ourſelves Low Before His Foot-ſtool; Acknowledging Ourſelves worthy of the utmoſt Contempt and Scorn of Mankind; Who, by This Means, Avenge the Injuries We have done to God: We muſt render Our Hearty Thanks to God, for the Deſire We have to ſerve Him; And all thoſe other Gifts and Graces We have received from His Bountiful Goodneſs: Let us Convince Ourſelves Within, That We are more oblig'd to bear with Others, than they can be to bear with us; By His Patience Let Him gain a Better World; For that if any one gives way to his Infirmities, They will take the Deeper Root within him.

Let him hold for Certain, that ſince The Succeſs of his Labour, and Converſion of Sinners, whom with ſo much Grief he ſees Periſhing before his Eyes, does not Depend upon Him: He ought not to be too Sorrowful or Concern'd, but to Expreſs a Charitable Compaſſion at their Misfortune; In a Word, Let Him Comfort Himſelf, with theſe Words of

* Isa. 30. 15. the Holy Prophet, * *In Returning, and Rest shall Ye be Saved; In Quietness and Confidence shall be Your Strength*: For the Refuge of the Good and Vertuous is to sit down in Silence; and to Expect and Wait God's Time, out of which they never can be truly at Ease; And, as they still find many Defects in their own Conduct, They must do Justice to Themselves, and not wonder if They do not gain upon others that Conviction and Reformation which is so Lame and Maimed in Themselves.

The next Instruction we meet with in the Life of Our Blessed Saviour, is not to be Biass'd in Our Practise, by the Sentiments or the Examples of those among whom we Live; At Least when they are Impious and Ungodly; and do not make God the Center of Their Actions, and the Object of their Hearts. St. *Paul* says, on

† Gal. 1. 10. the one Side, that † *If He, yet Pleased Men, He should not be the Servant of Christ*; And as-

|| 1 Cor. 9. 22. sures us on the other, That || *He made Himself All Things to All Men that He might Save Some*: To Teach us that we must after such a Manner Condescend to the Weakness of Men, whom we would gain over to the Faith and Interest of Our Blessed Saviour, but so as not to Deviate from the Strict Paths of Solid Vertue, which He Himself has set Before us. It is a Medium of Great Difficulty to be observ'd in Human Conversation, wherein the most Vertuous being too often Drawn away by the Multitude, fall off by Degrees from their first Love, and run with the Croud into the Way of Perdition: For a Man had need to be well Radicated in Vertue, to withstand the perpetual Opposition of his own Parents and Friends, and Those of his

his Daily Conversation and Acquaintance, to do that before their Eyes, which is directly Contrary to their Practise and Inclinations; And to Resolve Effectually to displease a Sinful World, that his Life and Actions may be Acceptable to God.

These are the Heroick Souls whom God Generally fortifies with the Treasures of his Grace; And, of whom the Holy Prophet Exclaims, In these Words, *How Great, O Lord! Is the Multitude of Thy Goodness, which Thou hast Laid up for Those that fear Thy Name; That Thou hast done for Those whose Hope is In Thee, Among The Sons of Men*! That is to say, For Those whom The Censures and Contradictions of the World cannot Turn aside, or withdraw Them from the Truth, with which Thou dost Inwardly Inspire Them: *Thou wilt hide them Under the Shadow of Thy Countenance, to Shelter them from the Persecutions of Men; And Thou wilt defend them In Thy House from the Strife of Tongues.*

Let a Man then, with Reason, Dispise what the World says of Him, so long as He Gives Them no Just Occasion to Complain and Murmur; Let him stick close to his Duty, And shut his Ear to all the Rest, And let him Prepare Himself with a steddy Resolution to withstand the Attacks of the Wise and Potentates of This World, In every Thing that bears any Relation to the Perfection of this Christian Life; Of which That Man is not Capable, who still has any Views or Pretentions to the Things that Perish; But He alone is the True Spiritualiz'd Soul, who only aims at God's Glory; And who looks upon all that Worldly Power and Greatness as Unworthy of Him, which

the Gospel of Christ Reproves and Contradicts: If such A One be accus'd of Enthusiasm and Singularity, Let him not wonder at it; But on the contrary, be assur'd, That those Revilers do but deceive Themselves; And that Pious Soul is far from being Singular, who has the Blessed Jesus, the Noble Army of Martyrs, and an Infinite Number of Hierarchy, of other Saints and Confessors for his Example.

VII. This Holy Instruction likewise has a near Relation to Those Religious, who have Devoted Themselves to a Monastick Community! For although they may have profess'd that Abstracted Way of Life; we must not follow any, but their Examples who act the Vows that they have Made, and Live up to the Rules of their Fraternity: Let them therefore Distinguish Themselves by their Obedience to their Spiritual Superiours; By their Patience under Contradiction of Sinners; By their Candour and the Sweetness of their Temper towards all Mankind; By the Simplicity and Lowliness of their Behaviour; By the Strength of their Souls Byass towards an Unblemished and Perfect Life; By the strict Adherence to the Rules of Their Order; And If this be to become Singular, or Puritannical, to live after this manner, I would advise them to be Singular: However, to maintain a Perfect Unity among Them, and for Peace Sake, They ought to observe these following Rules and Maxims.

1. Let Them, by no Means seek to Become particular Favourites or Sycophants to the Father President or Rector; But pay Him Their Duty with a Perfect and Implicit Submission and Obedi-

Obedience: Let them be Exact in this first Instance of their Vocation; Lest They should Prostitute that Heart to A Man, which is, Already, Consecrated and Devoted Unto God.

2. Let Them not Entertain any Friendship, or Fix Their Minds on Any Thing that might withdraw the Soul from God, or Interrupt the Devotion of their Hearts.

3. Let Them have no farther Views In their Holy Profession, than a Quiet Mind and Conscience, And a pure and Inoffensive Soul.

4. Let Them Accustom Themselves to Treat those very Persons with Charity and Good-Will, who have done them Wrong; And be Assured that to look upon any One as an Enemy In A House that is Devoted to God, is the very Spring of Confusion and Trouble.

5. Let Them pay a Tender and Kind Regard to the most Despicable of their Fraternity; And Behave Themselves with a Sacred Emulation and Longing to do Them Good; For the less They appear In the Eyes of Men, The more powerful They are In the Sight of God; And hold the same Class In their Religious Order, As the Blessed Jesus Himself maintain'd, In His Conversation with the World.

6. Let not their Eyes be dazled with the Lustre of those who shine In the Highest Place of Authority above Themselves: The Lowest Places under the Sacred Administration, are not less Illustrious and Esteemable In the Eye of God, than the Most Elevate and Supreme;

And for any One to look upon himſelf as more Honourable, Becauſe he is plac'd In A Rank Superiour to Others; Or Contemptible, Becauſe His Lot is in the loweſt Station, This is A Notion Moſt Unworthy of A Holy Brother.

7. Let Them, without Reſerve, Apply Themſelves to the Practiſe of the moſt pure and Refined Vertues, and Go on therein In Peace and Quiet, Even when they ſee others Spend their Time in the Neglect of it.

8. Let Them Support Themſelves In the Hope and Expectation of God's Promiſes, under All the Troubles and Perſecutions they may poſſibly meet with In their Way; Being faithfully Confident of This, That Heaven is the Price of their Reſignation; And that God will fulfil His Word: This Indeed, is One Article of the Croſs, that is Extremely Grating and Severe; And ſo much the more, as it is always forcible and Endleſs; and Becauſe, Nothing can be more Vexatious than to be Ill-treated by One's own Brethren; And that thoſe who paſs for Good and Vertuous, ſhould themſelves, Oppoſe and Perſecute Injur'd Vertue, under the Pretence of Zeal and Religion.

9. When They Labour under Unjuſt Reproaches, and are loaded with the Weight of thoſe Crimes which they have not Committed; Or Meet with Malicious Returns for the Good which They have done, and are revil'd as Hypocrites, which they are not; Let them pray to God for their Falſe Calumniators; And Bear this Injuſtice with Silence and Reſignation; with Peace and Perſeverance: Let them humble them

themſelves before God for this, That they ſhould ſtand in Need of ſo Violent a Remedy to Heal their Wounds; and that their Salvation required ſo ſevere a Trial upon them, That the very Servants of God ſhould become their Perſecutors.

10. Let them be very Careful to preſerve a good Opinion and Love of the Croſs, always looking upon Afflictions and Croſs Providence with Eſteem and Reſpect; and upon themſelves as not worthy to take a part of that Cup of which Our Bleſſed Saviour ſo Plentifully Drank of; And let them beſeech God, In frequent Devotion, that they may never looſe that Saving Grace, that Enlightens them to ſee, that the Way of the Croſs is the Better, and the much more Certain Path for them to walk In; Let them labour to do Good to All; And to Serve Them as their Maſters and their Superiours; without any Expectation from thence of Return of Favour, or Praiſe, or Reward; And that the Evil which they ſpeak of may not Turn Them out of the Right Way.

11. If They ſee that the Regular Diſcipline of their Order becomes Remiſs; Let them very ſeriouſly apply themſelves to a Self-Reformation: Let them Conſider that they have taken the Vows of Religion upon them, to become ſerviceable to others, and to Support and Succour them; And not to be Devoted to Idleneſs, or to ſpare themſelves. If any One does them Wrong, Let them not Complain; But Look upon Themſelves as Slaves, whom their Maſters Patrons have, at Leaſt, A Power to Inſult them when they Pleaſe. Thoſe that have other Sentiments, And upon whom theſe Salutary Doctrines can make no Impreſſion, Conceal A Wicked and Worldling-Heart, under the Garb and Appearance of Religion.

A

Divine Contemplation,

Upon The Manners and Disposition of Those Among whom Our Blessed Saviour Convers'd In The World.

I. O Lord of Life Eternal! Thou Charitable Pastor of Lost Sheep! O Divine *Jesus!* The Repairer of Our Losses! How Inconceivable, then, Is This Thy Love, which has So Closely Tied Thee to us, that Maugre All Our Filth and Corruption, of which Thou hast Such Horrour, Thou Canst not Dis-engage thy Self From us! Thou hast fill'd The Heavens With Angels who Praise Thee In their *Hosannah*'s; Who Love Thee; Who are Continually falling Down before Thy Throne In Adoration of Thee; Who Serve and Worship Thee for Ever and Ever! And Thou Descendest from This Glory, And Art Come upon Earth, to Converse for Thirty Years together, Among A Generation of Men, who pay No Respect, Nor Love Unto Thee: Thou Takest up thy Habitation In the Midst of A Perverse People; An Unjust and Impious Race, Among whom Thou Canst Behold Nothing but Abomination.

Who

Who has Engaged Thee, My God! Thus to Change The Method of Thy Proceedings In Regard of Mankind! Thou Cameſt to find Out the Fallen *Adam*, After his fatal Tranſgreſſion, In the Terreſtrial Paradiſe, from Whence thou didſt Expel Him: Thou Didſt Come Down to See Whether The Cries of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, which had Reacht up to Thine Ears, were True; And Thou didſt Deſtroy thoſe Cities of Abomination: When Thou didſt March Thro' The Wilderneſs, In the Midſt of The Children of *Iſrael*, It was with the Utmoſt Pains and Difficulty that *Moſes* Could Appeaſe thy Wrath, Juſt Ready to Exterminate That ungrateful People; And, Yet, almoſt All thoſe who came Out of *Egypt*, Periſhed, at Laſt, In the Wilderneſs, without Ever So Much as Having A Sight of *The Land Of Promiſe:* But, Yet, Now, O Lord! Thou, who Art The Same God, Omnipotent, Eternal, Infinite, Thou Vouchſafeſt to Come Down from Thy Dwelling Place, to Converſe with Men; Thou Beholdeſt Their Iniquities, Before thine Eyes; Thou Dwelleſt In their Houſes; Thou Walkeſt In their Streets; Thou Heareſt Their Blaſphemies; And Yet Thou doſt not Cut Them off. Their Abominations! Have They Not A Voice? And do They Not Shriek as Loud as the Sins of *Sodom*! Art Thou Grown more Reconcil'd to Sin, Now, And Is it Leſs thine Horrour and Abomination than it was Then! Or Is Thy Love and thy Compaſſion Greater towards Us, Or doſt Thou Love us more than Thou haſt Loved Thine Ancient, People!

Oh!

Oh! With how Great Reason did the Holy Prophet tell Thee, Under A Deep Sense of Thy Bountiful Goodness to us; * *Thou Hast Covered All Their Sin*; *Thou Hast Taken Away All Thy Wrath*; *Thou Hast Turned Thy Self from The Fierceness of Thine Indignation*; And, to Deliver us Therefrom, Thou Hast Turned All The Rigour of it upon thy Self: Thou Hast Chosen Rather to Attract us to Thee by Thy Gracious Presence, than to Confound us In thy Fury: Thou didst Wink at All Our Irrgularities; Thou didst Sympathize In All our Pains and Sorrow; Thou didst Bear the Importunities, The Humours, The Extravagancies of Mankind: But Thou Didst † *Walk In Darkness*, O Thou *Light* Divine! *And the Darkness Comprehended Thee Not!* Thou Wast The Father of All, But thy Creatures Express'd No Love for Thee! The God of the whole Creation without Being Honour'd! The Treasure of Every Created Being, But Thou wast not Esteemed! The Felicity of Every Rational Spirit without being Wisht for or Desired! The Great Shepherd and Bishop of Our Souls, and No One Knew thy Voice or Follow'd Thee; The Supream Sovereign Good of the Whole Creation without being Searched out or Sought after,

* Ps. 85. 2, 3.

† St. John 1. 5.

II. Happy He who could Approach thy Presence! who Enjoy'd thy Blessed Conversation; Who Beheld the Sweetness of thy Countenance; Who Heard the Musick of thy Voice, whilst Thou wast Performing the Miraculous Works of thy Providence, During the Time of thy Mortal Life. But Art Thou, at This Present, O Thou Life of My Soul! Art Thou, Less Sweet, Less Affable,

Less

Less Accessible! Thou art Still the Same! Thou Seest me; Thou Bearest with me! Thou art So Near to me, that Thou Conversest with me, and I Hear the Melody of thy Voice In my Inner Soul! Thou Conniveſt at my Failings; Thou Waiteſt till I ſhall Liſten to thy Charms, and be Devoted and wholly Taken up In thy Love and Service: Be not then In me, O my God! As A Light In Darkneſs! Enlighten my Soul! O Let the Beams of thy Glorious Brightneſs Dart In upon It and Pierce it thro'! If I might Preſume to Wiſh for any Thing; And Had been Permitted me to Ask A Favour of thy Majeſty, I ſhould have Eſteem'd my Self too Happy, to be the Laſt In thy Houſe; And to Remain, for Ever at the Door; To Kiſs the Traces of thy Feet; And the Ground on which Thou Haſt Walked.

The Holy Prophet, was well Appriſed of the Matter, when He Said, That * *One Single Day Paſt This Way, was of more Value Than A Thouſand Lives.* But This was too Little to Satisfie thy Love, O Infinite Bounty! Thou Comeſt, thy Self to Seek and to Find me! Thou Entreſt Into my Houſe; Thou Takeſt up Thy Manſion In my Heart! There It is I find Thee when I Will! Thou Over-lookeſt the Evil that Thou Findeſt There! And, Notwithſtanding All my Miſeries, Thou haſt not yet Forſaken me: It is Becauſe Thou haſt A Mind to Cure me! Would I but Return Unto Thee! Would I But Love Thee and Converſe with Thee! III. Pſ. 84. 10.

Turn me, then, Unto Thee, Thou God of Love! Change All my Wiſhes and Deſires, All my Affections and Inclinations; All my Thoughts and Every Grateful Idea of my Soul Towards Thee

Thee My Charmer! For what Can I Desire; Or what Canst Thou Give, more than Thy Self! Thou Art the Most Precious of All Treasures! There is Nothing to be Wisht for or Desired More! And the Gift thou makest me is the Donative of thy whole Self! Where Am I O my God! when I Seek after any Thing Besides Thee? What Is it that I'm Doing, when I find my Heart On Any other Object! Where Are All my Senses, when They Are Engag'd In Any other Love! Enlighten me, O Thou Eternal Brightness! Speak to me, and Let me hear Thy Notes, O Divine Shepherd! Let me Understand Thy Voice, And Never Wander More!

Is It Possible that I should be so throughly Miserable, And so Near to Thee! That I should Find my Self at such A Distance from Thee, And Yet That Thou shouldest, at the same Time be Within me! Thou Seest, O Lord! My Miseries; Thou knowest my Necessities, my Wants; Thou feelest, O Lord! my Losses! O Hear the Shrieks of my Poverty! Have Pitty on The Miseries that I Endure! And Since I find Thee Here, Whispering to me In Private; and with *Thy Still, Small Voice*; Look upon me with The Eyes of Thy Mercy! Grant that I may not thus Live with Thee, without Thinking on Thee! But That I may Grasp and Embrace Thee with All The Powers of my Soul! That I may be Ravisht with Thy Charmings; That I may Pursue Thee; That I may Wish for Nothing Else but Thee My God! And That I may find In Thee Alone All The Delightful Sweetness, All the Endearing Fruition and Tranquility of My Life!

I Acknowledge In Thy Presence, O my God! The Infirmities which Thou seest, that Thou Mayest Heal Them by whatever Means Thy Wisdom thinks fit! O Give me A True Sense of Sin! That I may Shun Them; And Thou, of Thy Unbounded Mercy, Pardon and Forgive them. Thou hast justly Banisht me From Heaven; But Thou hast Implanted In me A Desire to Return to That Blessed State! To be In Quest after It, and to Prepare and Qualify my Self for it, And That This should be the Principal Foundation of All my Cures: To this Purpose Thou hast Laid Thy Positive Commands upon me; And upon this thou wilt Require A Strict and Impartial Account of me. And yet As for me, I make this Vally of Tears My Heaven! I am wholly Taken up with the Vanities which my Eyes Behold; And I Forget Thee, my most Endearing God and Saviour! IV.

All my Study is to Please Them Among whom I Live; And I am so Concern'd whenever I happen to Disgust Them, as if my very Happiness Depended upon Their Pleasure. I Value their Applauses, as if They were A Recompence Worthy of All that I can do to obtain them; I am last Down when the Noise of Popularity Forsakes me, And Plume my Self Again, and Grow Gay and Pleasant upon The Praise of Men: I am Ashamed to be Like Thee; To be Humble and Meek, and Patient, And to Dispise what the World Esteems and Values: But what They Cry up, That I Approve, Let it be Never so Opposite to Thy Law! To satisfie The World, I neglect Thy Service; And Run Counter, And Contradict the Purity of Thy Doctrine: Pardon me, O Divine Mercy! That

Little

Little Regard I have Expreſt for thee! Thou Knoweſt what Great Influence the Vogue of the World has had Over me, more than the Conſideration of Thy Divine Majeſty! I think my ſelf very Great when the World Eſteems me, tho' I am Little and Deſpiſed In the Sight of My God! I am Diſ-ſpirited and Confounded when I am Rejected, by Them, Although I am In Thy Favour, and Accepted of Thee: And Thus It is that I Run Counter to The Truths; Confounding All the Perfection and Purity of Vertue, by my Falſe and Hietrodox Imaginaticns.

It is with the Utmoſt Zeal and Application that I do Every Thing that Is to be Seen of Men: And If They Give Their Breath Another Way, It Blaſts my Peace, and I am All Grief within: Whilſt they Behold me, I am Zealous, Even In the Active Part of Religion, and Diligent In the Exerciſes of All Chriſtian Piety; But, Before Thee, My God, who Seeſt me in Secreet How Cold and Luke-warm am I! How Faint and Languiſhing In my Devotions; Contenting my Self with that Little Service I pay to Thee, without Ever Conſidering How much I Owe Thee! What Benefit therefore, do I find In the Converſation of the World, O Thou God of my Soul! What Is it Beyond that of Labouring In A Painful Life, Amidſt A Set of my Fellow Mortals; A Generation of Wretched, Exile Souls, Entruſted with Frail Fleſh, whoſe Views are Merely Superficial and Out Side; who are Wavering and Inconſtant In their Notions, Blind and Darkned In their Underſtandings and Determinations Between Right And Wrong; Erronious In their Judgments Concerning Good and Evil; Obſtinate and

Dog-

Dogmatical In their Vices; Wavering and Fickle In their Choice of Vertue and Goodness; And Travelling On In Misery, Disquietude, and an Anxious Life, towards the Grave: Those who are Placed In an Higher Orb than the Common Herd, are Neither Happier, Nor Less Miserable than their Inferiours: Sin and Misery is the Retinue of them All! What Therefore, Can I Expect or Hope from such a Wretched Conversation! Tell me, if Thou Please, My Lord! And My God!

I shall, One Day, be Tried, And thou wilt Then Determine Upon my Soul, According to what Thine Omniscient Eye Beholds of My Present Thoughts and Actions. O Thou most Impartial Judge Both of the Quick and the Dead! Human Eyes can Penetrate No farther than The Out-Side; They Cannot Reach the Heart, nor Search Into The Hidden Man, to find out the Truth: And yet, The Deference I Pay is to their Judgments, To The Loss of My Immortal Soul and Privation of My God! O Deliver me from the Eyes of Men; These are The Eyes of *Basilisks*, which, with the Secret Poyson, They Emit Become Fatal, to Kill Every Soul that Looks upon Them: What is It that I Hope for, when I put my Confidence In Them? They will not do so much as They Might do for me! And If they Are Capable of Any Thing, They are Always Deficient In That which is most Necessary, and for my Good! When They Are doing Evil Offices Unto me, And Instead of Letting me Know Willingly, the Good I do to Them, They Complain of me! They Abuse me; They Persecute me; I can find No Comfort but In Thee! V.

And Thy Paternal Love is my Only *Asylum*, my Only Refuge to Flee to! Why, Then O Divine Jesus! Whence Is It That Thou The Chief Object of my Cares, The Only Treasure that I Pursue art neglected by Me!

The Distraction and Extravagance of Mind which thou Seest so Deep within me, is Not to be Conceived. I Acknowledge The Vanity and false Glittering of Those Pageantries that have Dazel'd me! I am Sensible That They Cannot Render my Condition Better or More Happy; That There will Remain Nothing from The Possession of them, But A most Bitter Repentance; And An Infallible Assurance, That there Can be No True Peace or Rest unto The Soul, but In Thee.

Blessed Be Thy Name, For Ever, O My God! For that Thy Goodness has Dispos'd Matters so, that No Enjoyments Can Satisfie my Soul, But Those that Are Solid and Eternal. *Turn away Mine Eyes, Lest They Behold Vanity*! Deliver me from Every Temptation that would Rob me of my True Felicity; Strengthen me Against the Flesh and Mistaken Notions of The World; And suffer not the Delusions and Enchantments of These Worthless Trifles to Separate me for Ever from Thee! O Thou Truth Immutable! O Supreme Felicity!

VI. But Thou hast Commanded me, O Lord, to Love, and to have Frequent Charity towards Those very Men, whom Thou Forbiddest me to Follow, that I may only seek Thee; Thou Knowest that poor Glimmering of Light that is within me; And how Incapable my Frail Nature is to Perform my Duty in this Matter! Teach and Direct me, Most Holy Lord! For

It

It was for this Purpose to Instruct and Lead us that Thou Art come down from Heaven; And dost Vouchsafe to be the Companion of Our Pilgrimage. My Will is Good, O Merciful Redeemer! to Help and Oblige the whole World; I should be Pleased to have it In my Power to do Good to All Mankind; And Even Content to be Despis'd and Abused by the whole Earth, Since It is Thy Command that It should be so. I am Ready to Undergo it, That All Mankind should set themselves Against me, Since That Severe Trial is upon me thro' The Permission of Thy Divine Providence; Only do Thou Enlarge my Soul, that my Love may Reach to Every Creature, thro' the Help of That Refined and Unblemisht Charity, which should Enflame my Heart towards Thee! O Teach me to Prefer and Esteem This Beyond All Other Endearments; And to Exclude Even All other Objects whatsoever, from Any Residence In That Thy Habitation! Lead and Conduct me O Heavenly Guide! In All My Ways; That I may not Go Astray and be Lost, amidst The Changes and Chances of This Inconstant World, This Mortal and Uncertain Life!

Teach me to Prefer the Frowns and Censures of the World to The, *Hosannah*'s and Favours of Men: For Fear of My Frail Heart, Lest It should Forsake Thee, to Follow Them. Lord Dispel and Scatter These Dark Clouds which hide Thy Brightness from me! That I may not be Deceived by These Vain Shadows, And Value Every Thing According to Its Real Worth. Thou hast Warned me *Not to be Afraid of Those who can only Kill My Body*; *And then*

Cannot Harm me Any More! But to Fear Thee Alone, who Canst Destroy Both my Body and my Soul In Hell: But, that I may Fulfil Thy Word, O Give me A Taſt, and Lay the Foundation In me, of A Sincere Deſire and Longing after that Immortal Life, I look for, And A Contempt of this Fleeting and Uncertain State! Give me ſo much Diſcretion that I may Make All my Glory to Conſiſt In Loving Thee, In fulfilling Thy Pleaſure; In Obeying thy Commandments: Be Thou The God, and Reign Thou King In My Heart; That *Perfect Love may Caſt Out Fear* of the Creatures.

VII. Teach me, O Lord! How much I Ought to Value Thy Precepts and Thine Examples: For Alas! 'Tis but A Trifle that I Looſe, when The Credit and Reputation of the World, And The Honours and Applauſes of Men are Taken from me, If I am but ſo Happy as to be Acceptable In Thy Sight. All that The World can preſent me with is but A Little External, Superficial Gloſs, which Cannot Reach the Depth and Bottom of my Soul! Thou, Only, O Lord! Canſt Comfort me Within, Thou, Only, Canſt fill its Large Capacity with Unutterable Sweetneſs and Delights! When ſhall I Behold my Self Enriched, Sanctified, Repleniſht, In this poor Exile World, with the Refreſhings of that Celeſtial Country! Do Thou only, O Bleſſed God, Lift up Thy Countenance and Look upon me, And, then I ſhall Eſteem my Self Rich and Plentiful Under the Deprivation of All The World Beſides; Content and Happy Let All the Earth Deſpiſe me, And throw the Utmoſt of their Venom on me.

In-

Inſpire me with Thoſe Graces that may Enable to do Thy Will; that may Give no Man Any Juſt Occaſion of Offence Againſt me by my Sins; Give me An Underſtanding Heart, that I may Serve and Live in Charity with All The World, For Thy Sake! Do Thou Attract All my Hopes, and All my Wiſhes to Thy Self, Since They are All Thy Due, and No Ones elſe; And are Ill-Employ'd About Any Other Object, But Thee! Bridle Thou My Tongue; And Fortifie my Heart, that I may keep Silence, And Undergo All the Wrongs and Injuries of Men without Repining: Let me not Regard Thoſe who Look ſo Big, and Make ſuch A Figure and Buſtle In the World, But As Muckworms whilſt they are Alive; And as The Feaſt of Worms, when they come to Lodge In their Grave of Rottenneſs and Corruption; That I may Worſhip Thee Alone, as The Only Great, The Almighty God of my Soul.

Take off the Diſguiſe before me, of All Falſe Shadows and Appearance, that I may Only Seek the Pure and Real Truths, That I make Thee Alone the Recompence of my Labours, And Eſteem Thee as I ought, Beyond All The Sages, All The Friends, All The Fathers, and All The Saints that Breath upon the Earth; That Nothing may Hinder or Prevent me from doing That Good which Thou putteſt Into my Heart; Or Make me Forſake Thy Commandments. Lord Support and Maintain me; Thou who Knoweſt my Infirmities, Enable me to Withſtand The Oppoſition I ſhall meet with In Thy Service, for fear I ſhould be Overcome! Defend me, Lead me, Guide me, Teach me,

Quicken me, O My Strength, My Way, My Truth and My Life!

VIII. How Easy is it for Thee, O Eternal Charmer! To Attract the Eyes of My Soul Unto Thee! I am very Sensible, that I should soon be Bereaved of My Life, Were not Thy Watchful Providence to Shelter Me against the Malice of mine Enemies; And that I am not already, Among the Number of the Dead, is wholly owing to Thy Care and Governance: But yet, although I find This Constant Help and Preservation In Thee: How Ungratefully do I at the same Time Forget Thee! How shall I Expect to find Thee thus, when All The Faculties within me are set on Work, on that which has no Relation to Thee! Lord, Rectify My Purposes and Designs! that I may only Seek, and Make it My Resolution to Serve and Please Thee! For to whom, Ought I to Consecrate My Inner Man but unto Thee! And who is there that can Supply the Large and Expansive Capacity of my Soul, out of Thee, O My God! And my All! If Thou, who art the Heavenly Fire, dost not warm My Soul, How shall it be Able to Seek Thee! O Be Thou, therefore Present to It after such a Manner, My Most Gracious God! that whether Sleeping, or Eating, or Speaking, At All Times, And In All Places, whether Labouring or at Rest, I may have Thee Ever Before my Eyes; That I may walk Before Thee with that Fear and Reverence that's Due to Thy Awful Presence; And Be for Ever fix'd on that which shall be Acceptable In Thy Sight.

Moses would not Depart from Those Places where He found Thou hadst Promised that Thou

Thou Thy Self wouldst Go Before Thy People; Because He did not Believe himself in Safety without Thee; And that having Convers'd with Thee for Forty Years Together, He Became Very Sensible of his own Weakness, And of Thine Almighty Power: And, as for me, O Lord! How shall I be Able to walk without Thee!, Amidst all those Perils and Dangers with which I am Surrounded! If I shall one Day, be Lost In the Fruition of Thee In Heaven! O Inconceivable Creator! And there Taste of Those Everlasting Joys; O why dost Thou not Joyn the Little Remnant of Days that are yet to be Spun out in this Mortal Exile, to that Eternity of Bliss! That I may, this Moment, Begin to Live from and In Thee! Thou art not Come Into the World, Nor hast Convers'd among Mankind, But that They should have Their Guide and Master with Them; Their Pattern; Their Happiness! Let me Conjure Thee, then, My Lord! By that very Love with which Thou hast United Thy Self unto Us, that whilst I Breathe upon the Earth, and Converse and Traffique with Mankind, I may have Thee always Present to my Heart and Soul; That Thou In All Things mayst Be My Lord and Master, My Guide, and Conducter and the very Light of my Life.

☞ O Most Pure and Holy Mother of God! Who hast found upon the Earth, In the Conversation of The Holy Jesus, Those Riches that are Infinitely more Precious, than the Greatest Potentates In The World can give; And hast been more Acceptable and Dear to Him than The whole Creation, Lead me Into His Presence, That I may Enjoy his Heavenly Conversation; And that All other Enjoyments may Become Tastless and Insipid to my Soul! And You, O Happy Spirits, Whom The Vision and Eternal Presence of this Heavenly Redeemer Furnishes with that Incontentable Variety of Bliss! Ye Know that I Run into Destruction, when My Course is not towards him! Obtain Therefore for me, The Favour, That I may be Ravisht with his Charms In This Life, And Enflamed with His Love, Under the Joyful Expectation And Assurance that together With You, I shall Enjoy the Everlasting Fruition of Him, In that Other World. *Amen.*

[redacted]

THE Fifteenth Instance OF THE SUFFERINGS OF Our Blessed Saviour.

CHAP. XV.

In His Fasting and Life In The Wilderness.

WHEN the Time was Come In which The Blessed Jesus was to Make His Publick Appearance In the World, and Manifest Himself by His Doctrine and His Miracles, The Holy Ghost Call'd St. *John* the Baptist from the Wilderness to Preach Repentance I.

to

to the Jews, and to Proclaim the *Messias* who had been promis'd Them so many hundred Years Before. But as the *Baptist* had never seen Him; For Fear They should Blame Him for Testifying of a Person whom He Knew not, He Gave Them a Certain Token whereby They might know Him Themselves; By telling Them, That * *He Among Them was* THE CHRIST, *on Whom They should see The Holy Ghost Descend In The Shape of A Dove.* And so it came to pass, that whilst St. *John* was Preaching Repentance, and Baptising those In the River of *Jordan*, who Came unto Him, and Confess'd their Sins; The Saviour of the World met Him there, and desired to be Baptised by Him: He had already taken *Our Sinful Flesh* upon Him, at his Incarnation; And the Form, the Resemblance of Sin, and the Pains due unto It, in His Circumcision, and in the Works of Pennance which He practis'd all His Life: But that He might the more Resemble Penitent Sinners, He would be Baptised with Them; And Sanctify those Waters, by which *The Children of Wrath* were to be Cleansed from their Original Corruption, and THEREBY *Become The Children of Grace:* The *Baptist* knew Him soon after, Before the Holy Ghost Descended In the Shape of a Dove; From whence He Knew for Certain, That this Sign Concerning the Truth of the *Messias*, was not given upon his Account; But to Corroborate, and give the Greatest Authority, Before the People, to His Testimony Concerning *Jesus*, That He was THE CHRIST.

* St. *John* 1. 33.

It was very Strange That so Holy A Soul, which was so much Enflam'd with the Love of this Heavenly Bridegroom, should not Know Him at

at first Sight: That Transcendent Brightness, Was it Possible it should be Conceal'd from his Most Pure and Ever Waking Eyes? He who, whilst he was Imprison'd within The Dark Confinement of His Mother's Womb, Was Sensible of the Presence of His WELL-BELOVED. Was It Possible for Him, Not to Know Him when Beheld Him with his Eyes? If the Little Lambs, just Yeaned, Can Distinguish their Dam's from the Rest of the Ewes amidst All the Flock, Notwithstanding They are All so much Alike to One Another, Why Could not This Sacred Herald have Distinguish'd Him, Among A Thousand Others, whose Sacred Spirit and Divine Love was the Preservation and Subsistance of His Very Being! It is The Property of True Love to Acknowledge God In Every Thing; And to Perceive Him Under Every Shape In which He is Shadowed and Concealed. If Any One Scruples This Truth, Let Him Love God, And Complain Afterwards that He Cannot Perceive Him.

The Holy *Baptist* made A Scruple of Baptising Our Blessed Saviour: On The Contrary He desired to Receive that *Sacrament* from his Divine Hands; whom He Knew to be The Fountain of All Heavenly Graces; And He Thought He should not very well Discharge His Trust In The Ministry By Baptising Him, Among the Sinful Race of Mankind, whom He was to Proclaim The Son of God: But so soon As The Blessed Jesus had Told Him that he must *Fulfill All Justice*; And set this Example of Repentance, In The View of All The World; The Holy *Baptist* Submitted And Administred That Sacrament Unto Him: For The Saints, follow II.

Not

Not the Dictates of Their own Light and Understanding In what Relates to the Service and Glory of God, But Only when The Divine Will and Pleasure is Not to so Visibly Communicated to Them; But when, by Any Means they Can find out what It is, They Resign Unto It, In Opposition to Every Notion and Idea of Their Own; And Think on Nothing farther than How they shall put It In Execution, without Presuming to Prie, or be Inquisitive Into the Reasons of the Divine Providence and Wisdom, or the Depth of God's Unsearchable Judgments: Thus, The Sacred Harbinger of Our Redemption, Consented that Our Blessed Saviour, by Submitting to the Ministration of Holy Baptism, should Declare Himself One of the Children of *Adam*; And was Content, to Fulfil the Determinations of Heaven, to Add, that The Holy Person whom He at that Time, had Baptised, was The VERY SON OF GOD; Leaving It to The Divine Wisdom, to find the Means, how to Establish This Important Truth; And to Convince the World of It.

III. For This it was, That so soon as the Blessed Jesus Was Baptised, He Beheld the Holy Ghost Descend *In the Shape of A Dove*; And Alighting, Rest on Our Blessed Saviour's Head; And Then Immediately He Declared to the People * *That Jesus Was The Lamb of God who should Take Away the Sins of The World*; And The Eternal Father, Confirm'd This His Testimony, by A Voice From Heaven, In which They Hear'd These Articulate Words, *This is My* BELOVED SON, *In whom I am Well Pleased!* Giving us Thereby to Understand, That He Had No Longer, Now, That Wrath and Estrange-

*St. John 1. 29.

Estrangement for the Sinful World, which He Had Possest Against Them 'till that Happy Moment; Since that His Only Begotten Son was Become Incarnate, and Had Taken, upon Himself, The Form of a Sinner. But, The Holy Baptist Also Witnessed This Great Truth, at that Time, for Many other Reasons. First, It was In The Presence of The Blessed *Jesus* Himself, who was but just before Come Out of The Desert. Secondly, It was when the Pharisees, Being Amaz'd at his Austere Life, Demanded, of Him, * *Whether He was not The* MESSIAS? And *He Constantly Denied It, Protesting That He was Not:* † *That He Ought to be Abased, But The* LAMB OF GOD *to be* GLORIFIED *and* EXTOLLED; *That He Himself was Nothing More, Than The* FORE-RUNNER, ‖ *The Voice of Him That Crieth In the Wilderness*; And, * *That He was not Worthy so much as to Untie The Latchet of His Shoes.*

* St. *John* 1. 20.
† Chap. 3. 30, 31.
‖ St. *Mat.* 3. 3.
* St. *John* 1. 27.

IV.

The Blessed Jesus Being Resolved to Maintain the Testimony of this Sacred Herald of His, by His Miracles and Doctrine; Prepar'd Himself for a Retirement of Forty Days; And as, in Every Article of His Life, He followed the Dictates of the Holy Spirit; The Holy Scripture Expressly Observes, That † *The Holy Ghost Led Him Into the Wilderness*; And By This We Understand That Our Blessed Saviour Receiv'd New Strength for His Approaching Temptation; And In Consideration of That Important Work He was Going to Undertake. But we find Nothing Registred, In Those Sacred Pages, Concerning his Stay, In the Wilderness, But that He *Fasted*: St. *Luke* Affirms That ‖ *He Tasted Nothing, All the Time that He Continued*

† St. *Matt.* 4. 1.
‖ St. *Luke* 4. 2.

*Chap. 1. 10. *tinued There*; St. Mark, says * *That He was with the Wild Beasts*; And That the Angels came Afterwards, and Ministred Unto Him: And They Leave it to Our Own Meditations, to Consider How much He Suffer'd from the Floods of Rain, and Flights of Snow; The Nipping Frosts, and Sloughy Ground, Under so very Sharp a Season of the Year, *viz.* In the Months of *January* and *February*; Having No Little Cottage, to Betake Himself unto for Shelter; But Being Expos'd to All the Inclemency and Injuries of the Open Air; Lying upon the Cold and Sobby Ground; Walking among Craggy Rocks and Briars; And, In a Word, Lodging his Innocent, and Immaculate Body with a Thousond Tortures, which He Never had Deserved; Without Suffering the Creatures to Administer the Left Comfort to their Creator.

Thus, This Long Fasting of Our Blessed Saviour, was Accompanied with many Other Fatigues and Sufferings with which his Precious Body was Over-born, whilst His Soul was Naked to God by a Continual Devotion: For He Allow'd not Those Indulgencies to Himself, which He had done to *Moses* and *Elias*; Who, having been Miraculously supported and Refresh'd, were Neither Sensible of Hunger nor Thirst in their Forty Days Retreat: But, thro' the Desire he had of making sufficient and Complete Satisfaction for Us, He Preserv'd His Natural Strength No farther then just to Enable Him to Go thro' His Course of Prayer and Mortification: So That His Hunger and Thirst, grew every Day, more Sharp and Craving; And he had Certainly, at Last, been Starv'd, Had not the

the Human Nature, In Him, been Subsisted by the Divine Energy, which Reserv'd Him for those Greater Sufferings he was Determined to.

And thus It is that He, who has Wrought So Many and Great Miracles, for The Comfort and Relief of His Servants, By The Same Almighty Power, Work'd Them Here, for His own Suffering and Torment. We See, by Infinite Examples; How Very Sharp and Craving The Torment of Hunger is, And to what Extreme Rage and Fury It Reduces Men: The Blessed *Jesus* felt this Bitter Pain, No Less than Those who are Famishing Under the most Pressing Want and Necessity; Altho' He Expreſt none of those External Acts of Violence, Which Nature forces A Man to do Under that Condition: One May Say that He Gave up his Very Life, for us, as many Times as He Would have Lost It, By So Sharp and Rigorous A Fast, If The Cravings of His Soul to Suffer Still more, upon Our Account, Had not made Him Work A Miracle upon Human Nature to Preserve It, for That Purpose, In that Place.

And Here we must not Forget that Particular Circumstance Which St. *Mark* has Set down of Our Blessed Saviour's Being In the Desert, In The Midst of *Wild Beasts*, wherein we may See that He Humbled Himself, for Our Sakes, and Condescended So Low, as to Frequent Those Dismal Places, which Were Only the Habitation of Toads and Vipers, And The most fierce and Savage Creatures: Not That He took Any Pleasure In the Company of Such fatal and Hideous Associates, But Because In These Children of Venom and Destruction He Saw Some Re- V.

Resemblance of the Odious Nature and Deformity of Sinners; On Whom He Never Reflected, But it was A Fresh Dagger to Pierce his Tender Heart! Whilst He Beheld These Savage Creatures, Obedient to his Call, And Forgetting their Natural Ferocity, Couchant at His Feet, He Griev'd to Think on the More Savage and Cruel Nature of Mankind; And, Especially of Those, who, After they had been So often Attracted by the Charms of His Sweetness; And Treated with So much Generosity, Still Continued Obdurate and Harden'd In their Guilt, to Their Eternal Damnation.

The Wild, and Savage Beasts Surrounded Him; The Angels of God Drew Near, And Ministred Unto Him; Mankind Alone for Whose Sake He Left His Father's Kingdom, And Came Down from Heaven, He did not Appear! This Touch'd the Compassionate Jesus to the Heart, And, He Prepared to Seek Him, who would not Come of Himself to Meet His Redeemer, But, on the Contrary, Shun'd and Fled Him as his Enemy.

We Ought to Envy Those Animals, who forsook their Fierceness, and Grew Tame In Presence of their Creator! And to Imitate Those Blessed Angels, who Acknowledged their Sovereign Lord, Amidst Savage Beasts; And Apply'd Themselves to Serve Him. They do not Encompass The Blessed Jesus to Prevent Our Coming At Him; But Rather to Introduce us Into His Divine Presence; He is Easy of Access to All The World! And, Always Ready to Receive us! Let us but Approach and Draw Near Unto Him, As The Savage Herd did, by Renouncing Our More Brutish Sensualities and the

Venom

Venom In Our Souls; Or Like the Bleſſed Angels, Miniſter to Him with Hearts Purified from Our Sins and Devoted to His Love: For It is not that He would Flee from Mankind, that He Retired Into the Deſert Place; But That He Might Seek them, Afterwards, with So Much the More Inclination and Bounty, from His More Quick and Lively Senſe of their Privation.

This Management, of Our Bleſſed Saviour, Affords us A Wonderful Means of Improvement: For It Lets Us Into The Knowledge of Two Great Truths; Firſt, Of what Great Moment and Importance The Salvation of Souls Is, Since He Would not Enter upon his Labours that Way, Until He had Appeaſed the Juſt Wrath and Indignation of His Eternal Father by A Fourty-Days Faſt; Drawn down the Divine Bleſſing upon His Doctrine and Works, by That Uninterrupted Continuance of Prayers and Devotion: The Bleſſed Jeſus Might have Been Indifferent as to Our Salvation, or Perdition: He Was Holy, Great, Eternal, And Happy Without us: But Since He Took the Charge of Our Reconcilation and Redemption Upon Him; His Unbounded Charity has forgot Nothing, That Could be Any Wayes, Conducible To The Accompliſhment of This Mighty Work: And, As All Our Happineſs Conſiſts In the Salvation of Our Souls; He has Oblig'd us Unto Nothing But what is Abſolutely Neceſſary and Inſtrumental to Lead us Into that State: He Graciouſly Determin'd, that Our Salvation ſhould be the Quadrant of All Our Obligations; And Nothing is Acceptable or Agreeable to Him, that Could Poſſibly Detain or Withdraw us from Our True VI.

Felicity; And yet so Wretched and Miserable is Our Condition, that We Spend our Lives in the Neglect and Forgetfulness of those Duties which are of so Great Import and Consequence, Unto us; Or Look upon them as the Most Despicable and Insignificant Concerns of our Life! Notwithstanding we have Received this Expostulation from the Very Lips of The Blessed Jesus himself; * *What Profit Can It be to A Man, if He should Gain The whole World, If He Looses His Soul*! And Although He has Represented The Unhappy End of the Rich Worldling; Who, Thinking on Nothing Else But to fill his Granaries, and Forgetting and Neglecting his Salvation, Heard This Voice from Heaven, Thou Madman, † *Thou Fool! This very Night thy Soul shall be Required of thee! And*, THEN *Whose shall these Things Be, which thou hast Heaped, up together*! And He Adds, Behold his Fate! For, ‖ *So is He that Layeth up Treasure for Himself, And is not Rich towards God!*

*St. *Mat.* 16. 26.

†St. *Luke* 12. 20.

‖ Ibm. v. 21.

Ye are Infatuated, Therefore, Utterly Distracted, In Respect to the Tremendous and Dread Judgment of the Eternal and Un-erring Wisdom, O Ye Kings! Ye Potentates of the World! Ye Doctors, Priests, Religious Prelates, Bishops! Ye are Mad, O Ye Soldiers, Leaders, Magistrates! Private Persons, Poor, Rich Merchants, Mechanicks; Ye are All Inchanted, and Out of your Senses! Who are so Extremly Carking and Caring About this Life, And are Indolent, and Negligent About That which shall Never have an End! What Good will it do you to have Heaped up Mountains of the Treasures of This World, If you are Poor and Empty of those, that shall Never Fade Away!

Away! The Moment is Drawing On, when You shall be deprived, for Ever, Both of the One and the Other! The Fugitive Enjoyments, The Perishing Riches of this World will ere long, Forsake you! And then you will be Deprived, you must Bid Adieu, for Ever, to those which will be Hid from your Eyes!

Have we not Great Reason to Tremble, when we see * An Apostle, Strengthen'd and Confirm'd in Grace, *How Severely He Corrected and Mortified His Body, Least,* † *After He had Saved Others He Himself should Become A Castaway!* St. *Austin*, After his Conversion, Presumed not any Longer to Teach *Humanity*, for Fear He should have Mispent his Time that Way, which should have been made Use of, about the Concerns of his Salvation; St. *John* Baptist passed Twenty Years in a Terrible Solitude; St. *Bartholomew* was Flea'd; St. *Laurence* Broyled on a Gridiron; The Glorious Company of the Apostles; And the Noble Army of Martyrs were Torn in Pieces; Burned, and sent Quick Out of the World by a Thousand Kinds of Torture: Whole Legions of Saints fled into The Deserts; Others Built Religious Monasteries, as much to Confine Themselves, as to be Abstracted from the World! Inshort, All of 'em, Labour'd with Incessant Pains and Application, Under a Certain Hope to *Work Out their Salvation.*

* St. Paul

† 1. Cor. 9. 27.

But, If We Farther Consider, how we are Travelling on, in the Midst of Snares, and the Dangers of Perishing for Ever, Under a Vain Security and Presumption; How We Squander Away the Time, which we Ought to Improve to Our Everlasting Benefit and Advan-

tage; How we Give a Loose to Our Appetites to Rove and Run at Large; How we Prostitute All our Thoughts and Cares to Pleasure and Licentiousness; That we will not spare an Hour, for the more Beneficial Duty of Prayer, and the Care of Our Souls; How we Allow Little or No Time for Prayer and the Care of our Souls, unless it be some Lost Moments which the World has No Occasion for; and yet we Glory in That as if it were a Mighty Business; Altho' They are fill'd with Distractions, Indolence, and Loosenes! Are not these Fresh Arguments for Dread, and of Tremendous Consideration! If We are Insensible of these Things, have we not Great Reason to Lament, that we should be so Harden'd, as to have No Feeling of that, which has made the most Holy and Devoted Saints to Tremble!

The Only Remedy of so Unhappy a Misfortune is to Cast Our Eyes on the Blessed Jesus, And Instantly to Believe Him to take Pity on Our Souls, which have been so Expensive to his Love: For as it is most Certain, According to St. *Austin's* Doctrine, That * *He who has Purchas'd Us without Our Selves; Will not Save Us without Our Own Coopperation; That No Soul shall be Saved, Unless He is Called of God; That whosoever is Called shall not do the Works of Salvation, without the Assistance of the Divine Grace; That No One shall be Worthy of That, who does not Obtain it by Prayer, and solemn Devotions; It is As Certain Also, That when Sinful Men Destroy Themselves, It is by the Permission of God's Providence and Justice; That they Are not Undone for Ever, Because of the Divine Goodness and Pleasure: That God Calleth us without Our Asking It of Him; Because this Call De-*

* Lib. 1. Ad Simplicianum. Q. 2.

Depends Entirely upon his Goodness: That He is Ready to Assist and Succour us, Before we Desire It; In a Word, That No Man is Excus'd from Prayer; And it is Always Our Own Fault if we do not Pray for it, or if we Neglect Our Salvation: The Inference of All which is, That Our Blessed Saviour has Taken upon Him hereby to show us that Care, which we Ought to have of Our Selves.

VII. The Second Thing which Our Blessed Saviour Teaches us, is the Manner in which we Ought to Perform Our Fasts, and Other External Acts of Religion, that They may Become an Effectual Remedy to All the Distempers of the Soul: For, As a Certain Holy Person has said, "*To Fast and to Commit Sin; It is to Imi-*
"*tate the Devil, who Always is Acting Wicked-*
"*ness, but Never Easy.* The Fasting of Our Blessed Saviour, was Accompany'd with Devotion and Solitude; Far from the Noise and Bustle of the World, it was Entirely Taken up with God: The Holy Scripture, Moreover, Reproves that Fast which is Joyned to *Self-Will*, to Vicious Works, to an Irregular Life, And to such Dispositions as Thwart, And are Contradictory to the Law of God: And St. *Gregory* Compares Those who Fast without Mortifying their Passions, to *Simon* of *Cyrene*, who Carried Our Blessed Saviour's Cross, But did not Suffer upon It after his Example; The mere Fasting does not Root Out Iniquity from the Soul, And Plant Virtue there, in its Stead: The Fast most Acceptable to God is to Abstain from That which will Destroy and Ruin it for Ever.

Not That it is A Sin to Fast, when A Man is Involv'd in Sin and Iniquities; For Altho' to Fast under such A Circumstance and Condition is of No Worth, In Respect to the Meriting of Salvation; A Man had Better Fast without Merit, than to Sin By The Neglect of it: And tho' such A Fast does No other Good, But to be The Better Dispos'd for the Day of Grace, It will Always be of Extraordinary Use and Service: But This is what I say, to the End That A Work, so very Beneficial, And so much Esteem'd, by All Godly Men, should not be Perform'd without that Good Fruit, which One Reaps Thereby, when We Add thereto A Contrite Heart and the Exercise of Good Works.

There are Two Extremes, Likewise, we Ought to be Apprehensive of, Under The Performance of This Religious Duty; The One of Procuring, for This Purpose, such A Variety of Palatable Provisions which may be Sparingly Eaten On A Fast Day, that, By this Means, The Fast would be Chang'd Into A Nicety of Entertainment, which would Be, As The Holy Father has Observ'd, * *To Make Abstinence the Occasion of Gormandizing and Gluttony.* The Other Extreme is, to Weaken and Enfeeble the Natural Constitution Thereby, to such A Degree that would Incapacitate A Man for the Performance of his other Duties, and Keep Him from his Devotions. We must Also take Great Care against One Certain Illusion of the Devil, whereby One is too Much Taken with Supererogatory Fasts, and Voluntary Abstemiousness rather than Those which are Appointed and Commanded: For this *Adversary of Our Souls*, by Inspiring us with A Fervency After the Austerities

* St. Aug. Enarrationes in Ps. 43.

sterities which We would Voluntarily take upon our Selves, Endeavours to Render us Disqualified and Unfit for Those which Holy Church has Injoyn'd us; And to Debauch Our Palates with a Greedier Rellish of those Particular Devotions, which we Practise In Private, than of That Religious Course which Proceeds from The Command of God. Therefore Every Good and Vertuous Act, In which there is more of Self-Will than of Obedience, ought to be Suspected; And The Blessed Jesus Himself, who Gave Himself up A Sacrifice upon The Cross Through an Entire Submission to His Blessed Father's Will, Loves Obedience Rather than Any other Sacrifice.

A

Divine Contemplation,

Upon The Fasting and Life of Our Blessed Saviour In The Wilderness.

WHAT Return of Glory and Thanksgiving shall I Render Unto Thee, for All The Benefits Thou hast done Unto me; And which Thou Still Continuest to Heap upon me, O Thou Glory of Angels! Thou Faithful Friend and Companion of Miserable Sinners! O Divine Jesus! My Lord! And My God! Let Every Creature Laud and Magnify, Thee with me! And Because Thou Art Above All Praise I.

and Benediction, Let Thine own Mighty Works, Thine Adorable Perfections, Thy Puissant and Almighty Majesty Declare Thy Glory! Since They are The Measure of the Blessings which Thou Heapest Upon me; Without The Least Disregard to the Nothingness of my State and Condition: For, what Would Become of me, were not Thy Never-Failing Providence to Watch Over me! Were I Deprived of Those Mercys which I So Daily and Continually Receive from thy Goodness! Lord! Do Thou Teach me to Acknowlege Them as I Ought; And to fix my Soul to Thee with All my Strength! And As 'tis Impossible for me to Love Thee as much as Thou Deserveſt; Let there Be, at Least, Nothing, In me, But what is Enamour'd of Thee.

Thou Knoweſt, O Lord, that Tho' Thou shouldſt Comprize The Whole Powers of Love, that fill the Souls of The Faithful Both In Heaven and Earth; And Contract the force of them All Into The Center of my Heart, So that All Their Flames were United to A Point In me; This Would be But A faint and Languid Warmth, In Comparison of That Burning Fire of Thine Towards me! Thy Love Had Never A Beginning! It was Alive from All Eternity! Before I Breath'd Vital Air I was Present to Thy Divine Wisdom! And Even Then, of Thy Boundless Mercy, Thou Hadst Taken The Burthen of my Sins Upon Thee; The Charge and Load of my Miseries, and my Salvation! Thou Kneweſt that Thou shouldſt have No Need of me! But That Eternal Love, with Which Thou haſt Loved me, Mov'd thy Mercy and Compassion Towards me, So That Thou didſt

didſt Forget Nothing, which Depended upon Thee, or was In thy Power, to Prevent my juſt Damnation, or Hinder me from Periſhing By thy Juſtice.

I Adore That Inconceivable Love! I Adore That Paternal Heart, In which I am Regiſtred! I Adore thoſe Endearing Cares, With which thou haſt Engag'd Thyſelf for my Salvation! O Merciful Lord! Let not thy Miſerable Creature Periſh! Let it not be Said That thou haſt Laboured In Vain, to Redeem it! 'Twas Out of Thy Gracious Love to me, That Thou art Retired Into The Deſert; That Thou Stayeſt There So Long, Among the Wild and Savage Beaſts; That Thou There Acceptest The Miniſtration of Angels; For my Sake It is That Thou haſt Continued A Faſt of Fourty Dayes; That thou didſt Bear the Sharp and Bitter Cravings of Hunger, And Faintneſs; That Thou waſt So Expoſed to the Gleamings of The Sun, The Inclemency of the Air, and the Inundation of the Clouds from Heaven! It is for my Salvation that Thou didſt ſhed So many Tears before the Mercy Seat of Thine Eternal Father, That thou Mightſt Thereby Melt his Heart, Appeaſe His Wrath, and Satisfie His Juſtice: Here It was that Thou didſt Importune Him to Open The Door of my Heart That I Might Receive This Word, and Taſt the Sweetneſs of Thy Holy Precepts; That He Would Vouchſafe to me The Gracious Illapſes of his Enlightning Spirit, That I may Underſtand the Doctrin of thy Saving Faith! That He would Bear with me when I Offend, And Receive me Into his Favour. I Neither Have nor Can I Hope for any Bleſſings moſt Divine Saviour, for which I am not Indebted II.

Indebted to These Precious Tears of Thine, These Fervent Prayers, This Miraculous Instance of thy Pennance; Thy Fasting, and this Inexpressable Love of Thine, Before I had any Being; before 'twas Possible for me to have any Knowledge of Thee; Before I had any Soul to Love Thee, or Was In a Capacity to Lay my Case Before Thee, or Implore Thy Mercy!

How Amazing Is thy Concern, thy Tenderness and Sollicitude, In my Behalf, O Thou Father of Mercy! How Stupendous towards a Prodigal So Ungrateful; and Utterly Unworthy of thy Love! Thou art fully Acquainted with my Miseries; And Thou Loveſt me more Tenderly than if Thou hadſt Born me in Thy Bowels! But what is it that I say! Haſt thou not Engraven me in Thy Heart! Haſt Thou not Searched me Out! Haſt Thou not Called me, Excited me, by The Importunities, And Charms of Thine Eternal Love! That in Beholding my Self Prevented, and Encompass'd with the Blessings of Thy Sweetness, I may Know the Loving and Paternal Heart from whence they Spring and are Derived!

Burn, then, O my Heart, all Cold and Frozen as Thou Art, Let the Flames of Thy Love Grow Strong towards this so Dear and Amiable a Redeemer! Expand, and Open thy Self Wide, Thou Straight and Narrow Soul! For, He who seeks thy Love, who is in Quest after thee, and who has Done such Mighty Works, on thy Account, will not Despise Thee! I want Words, Most Holy Jesus! To Express what I feel! But I Cast my Self into that Eternal, Celestial Love which Enflames Thee! It is there that Thy Ineffable Goodness has Given me my Being with

All

All the Blessings that I Enjoy, and that I hope for: And 'tis Thither I Return to Devote my Self thy Victim! O Let me Burn with this Love, Let this Lambent Flame Encircle me, O Lord! And let me not be Disappointed of the Effects and Blessed Fruits of that River of thy Tears, whose Tide has been so Strong; And of those Miraculous and most Mighty Labours which Thou hast Undergone for my Sake. I Love Thee O Lord, with all my whole Soul! Most Dear *Jesus*! If Thou seest that my Love is not so pure and Extensive, as I say, It seems to me at Least, that I would have It so: And if Thou findest also, that I have not this Desire, I do Sincerely wish I had! And tho' I should Deceive my Self in my own Imaginations; I cannot be Mistaken in Thy Knowledge; For This I'm Certain of, that Miserable as I am, Thou art Ready to Receive me.

III. Thou Knowest Lord, What A Wretched Creature 'tis, Thou takest so much Pains for! Thou seest what it is, that Grieves Thy Holy Spirit In me! But Thou Findest In Thy Self what is most Proper and Convenient for me! Lord, do Thou Work in the Soul of Thy Servant, what Thy Wisdom, Thine Omnipotence, and Thy Goodness seeth Meet! Grant me O Thou Divine Refulgent Brightness! That I may Behold my Self in Thee; That I may Learn to know my Self; That I may Abhor and Detest my own Vileness and Corruption; That I may Hasten and Fly from it; And That I may seek Thee; My God! Who Only Canst Deliver me from All my Evils; And Heal, and Cure me of my Wounds! Is it Possible that Thou wouldest Undertake the Important Work of

my

my Salvation, with ſo much Trouble, and Afflictions; And that I ſhould Rather Chooſe to Ruin and Deſtroy my Self, than to Treat with Thee about it! This has been the Buſineſs of thy whole Life; From the Moment of thy Conception, to the Laſt Gaſp of thy Breath: But as for me, Wretched and Infatuated as I am, I will not ſo much as take Notice of the Fatal Dangers which Encompaſs me Round About; And Concern my ſelf ſo Little with my ſelf, or Thee either, as if my Everlaſting Salvation were not at Stake upon it! The Precious Time Thou haſt Allotted me for thy Service, and to Obtain thy Kingdom, Glides away from me Every Moment; And I Squander it Away in Offending Thee! At the ſame Time I Hunt After the Mereſt Trifles, that I may Drown the Thoughts of thoſe Eternal Treaſures that I have Loſt.

My Infancy, My Youth, And all the Reſt of My Riper Years are Slid Away after the ſame Manner; So that I cannot ſay, to Speak Truth, that I have Spent One Single Day, without ſome Default; Or In A Perfect Application to my Duty: My Thoughts are Roving, and Diſtracted; My Appetites Eccentrick and Irregular; My Memory full of Vain and Idle Images; My Underſtanding taken up with the Things that Periſh; My Will Grovelling In The Mire and Filth of Baſe, Sordid, and Shameful Objects; My very Prayers and Devotions, With my Faſts, And all Thoſe Other Inſtances of Religious Service, that Can be Render'd Acceptable In Thy Sight, are ſo full of Indolence, Languid Coldneſs, and Self-Love, And other Defects and Imperfections; that I might more juſtly Ex-

Expect Thine Indignation than Thy Blessing upon Their Account.

In the Common Affairs of My Life, I am Fickle, Touchy, and Uneasy; Always Transported with some Extreme Passion, either of Over-joy, or Fear, or Expectation: And thus, this Miserable Heart of Mine, being Continually Torn in Pieces, by Contrary Impulses; And Consumed by a Thousand Different Objects, When I would Converse with Thee: I find my Self so Estranged to Thee by this Means, that I can hardly Believe my Self the Work of Thy Hands: I am as Great A Novice in Spiritual Matters; So Harden'd Against the Impressions of thy Most Holy Spirit; so Little Vers'd, In the Exercise of True Vertue; So Insensible to whatever would draw and Unite me unto Thee, as if I were Come Into the World for some other Purpose, than to Qualify my Self for thy Love and Everlasting Fruition. I Ask Heaven of Thee, as if it was my Due; I Live with as much Assurance and Security, as if I had been Worthy of that Great Reward; And Content my Self with the Little Good I do; or Even with the Shadow of Religion, and my Lukewarm, and Negligent Performances, as if I could not think it Possible for me to Forfeit the *Kingdom of God.* From Hence 'tis, that, That which Ought to be my Chief Business, is the Least of my Cares: Thou seest, O Lord to what Great Dangers this Vain Presumption Exposes Me; And I will not see it! And the Love which Thou hast for me, Gives Thee All that Torment, which I ought to have for It, my Self.

IV. O Fountain of Mercy! O Heavenly Shepherd! O Son of the Living God! Who Cameſt down from Heaven to find the Loſt Sheep! who Art come Thy-ſelf to ſeek them! Becauſe thou Knoweſt that they Can Eaſily Loſe themſelves, and be Undone without Thee, But cannot Return into the Fold, Unleſs Thou in Thy Goodneſs, ſhall bring them Back Thither: I Have Erred and Strayed from Thy Ways Like a Loſt Sheep! I have Forſaken thy moſt Pleaſant and Rich Paſtures, to Run after Withered and Fatal Plants! I have Seperated my Self from Thy Flock; By Wavering in my Obedience; And I have followed the Wolves who have Devoured me! I have left the Path through which Thou didſt Conduct me; And Caſt my Self into By-ways which led me, into Precipices to fall Quick into Deſtruction. I Acknowledge my Trangreſſions, O Charitable Paſtor! Look After Thy Loſt Sheep! Call Back Thy Servant! And Permit me to be with thee, As thou didſt, ſuffer the Wild and Savage Beaſts to be, Among which Thou Livedſt in the Deſert: I am more Intractable and Fierce than They; O Let the Sweetneſs of thy Gentle Love, Tame and Soften me, and diſpoſe me to that Eternal Submiſſion and Obedience I owe Thee.

Imprint upon my Heart an Ardent Deſire to be Saved, Since it is not Thy Will that I ſhould Periſh. Beſtow upon me A Glympſe of thy Divine Light, that I may Ever ſee the Importance of my Soul's Salvation; Since This is the Firſt and Chief Thing thou haſt Commanded me to Seek after. Let me at Leaſt, Join my Endeavours to Thy Labours, that Thou mayſt Help me

me, by thy Almighty Power, And Support the Weakness that Thou Beholdest In me.

Thou hast Said, O Lord! that * *No Man Can Come Unto Thee, Except The Father Draw Him.* * St. John 6. 44. Thou Knowest that None have Need to be Drawn, But *Sinners*, that They may Become *Saints*; That The *Good* Need not to be Compell'd; But those that Are of An *Obstinate* and *Harden'd Spirit*. Since Thou Permittest the Wild Beasts to Approach Thee, And Attractest Even Them by Thy Winning, and Gentle Treatment; Wilt Thou not as Well, Also, Suffer me to fall Down At Thy Feet! They Can have No Affection for Thee, Any Longer than They See Thee; And will Return to Their Natural Ferocity and Wildness, So Soon as Thou art No More Among Them: But If Thou wilt Be So Gracious as to Draw me Unto Thee, O My God! Thou Wilt make me A New Creature; Thou Wilt Change A Wolf Into A Lamb; A Lion Into A Sheep; And A Rebellious Slave and Traitor, Into An Obedient Subject and Servant, who Never will Forsake Thee More!

V. Thou hast Promised, by One of Thy Prophets, to Those Souls who have Wandered from Thy Paths, * *Thou Wilt Conduct Them Into The Wilderness, And Speak Comfortably Unto Them.* * Hosea 2. 14. Thou Knowest, O Lord! What That Solitude is, where They are to Hear Thy Voice; Far from The Noise, and Turmoils of the World. I do not Apprehend This Perfectly, But, Methinks, If I was In A Place, where I could hear No other but Thy Voice, And where Thou wouldest Whisper Into The Deepest Recess of my Heart; I should Soon be charm'd with what Thou shouldst Say; And Thy Goodness would

Accept

Accept of The Devotions of my Soul. O Bleſt Retirement! Where Every Thing Conſpires that Can Adminiſter our Felicity! Will It never be my Happineſs to find this Comfort! O My Provident Redeemer! Lead me Into This Paradiſe; And There Make Thy Dear Addreſſes to my Soul! Lord! Speak Thou but The Word; And Thy Servant will pay Attention! Let Every other Voice, as to my Soul, be for Ever Silent! For Thy Words are Sweet, And Thy Notes Inchanting! Thou Didſt In A Moment, Make me Clean, and Purify me! Thou Wilt Enflame and Raviſh me with Thy Love; And Embitter Every Unlawful Pleaſure, that would take Away The Hony of Thy Word from Within me. Let Every Creature, then, Be Silent! Do Thou Alone, Whiſper In thy Still, Small, Voice Unto me, O My Divine Inſtructer! My Lord! My Conſolation! And My Love.

☞ O Sacred Mother of God! Moſt Pure Sheep, from whoſe Virgin-Womb, the Immaculate Lamb Proceeded, Thou Didſt Never Run Aſtray; Thou haſt Alwayes Followed The Lord, In The True Courſe of Religion and Vertue; And Haſt, In Thy Self Receiv'd More Divine Graces, Than The Whole Creation, Beſides, Put Together; Vouchſafe Some Small Portion, of 'em, To This Miſerable Sinner! Uſe What Intereſt Thou Haſt, for me, That I may be So far In my Redeemer's Favour, as to be Soley and Entirely His; And That No Creature may Separate My Heart from Him!

And

And You! O Blessed Spirits! Minister Unto me Also! And Conduct and Lead me to Those Everlasting Solitudes, Where The Soul Swims In Rivers of Pleasure! And is for Ever far Remov'd from The Fatal Hurricanes and Dangers of This World! And Since God Created me to Dwell, With You, In That Happy Abode; Grant me that I May Covet, with An Insatiable Thirst, That Felicity which you Enjoy; That I may, without fainting Pursue your Bliss; And so Pass thro' These Transitory and Temporal Evils, That, With you, I May Possess Those Joys that Are Eternal. *Amen.*

THE Sixteenth Instance OF THE SUFFERINGS OF Our Blessed Saviour.

CHAP. XVI.

In His Temptation In The Wilderness.

THE Blessed Jesus having Spent Forty Days without Eating; He found Himself, In His Sacred Humanity, Grown So Weak and faint, that The Evil One took *That* as the Fittest Opportunity, to Lay his Temptations Upon Him, without Being Perceived: For It is The Stratagem, of That *Grand Impostor*, to Pick out the most favourable

vourable and Proper Times wherein He is Most Likely to Seduce Mankind; Either Under The Pretence of Some Good Prospect; Or the Necessity of Some Present Exigence; Or, Lastly, By the Suggestion of Avoiding Some Great Mischief, if there be Any Apparent Evil, that He may Pretend to take A Handle from. Now, He has No Need of His Wiles, Or forcible Impulses, to Trepan Those, Withal, who Have Already Given up, and Habituated Themselves to Iniquity; These Will not Enter The Lists Against Him; But Mould Themselves into what Form He Pleases; And do His Work, As if They Were Afraid that God should Heal Them! When The Heavenly Forbearance Calls Them to do Pennance, And They have Some Good Disposition In them, to Answer His Invitation; It's *Then*, They Begin to feel The Weight of Sin, The Importunity of Temptation, And The Strength of *The Enemy*; Who will not, But with Great Reluctancy, Leave The Place Where He has Reign'd So Long: So that, Properly Speaking, They Only who Enter Into The Engagement, Can be Truly Said to Undergo Temptation; And, Therefore, It is, Particularly, For Their Instruction, that Holy *Jesus*, Suffer'd Himself to be Tempted With so much Artifice and Insinuation, After A Retreat of Forty Days; Past In Contemplation of the Most Divine and Heavenly Subjects, and In An Intimate Union with Almighty God, His Father.

It is very Admirable, and Astonishing, that the Blessed *Jesus* should Permit So Odious an Apostat to Approach Him; And, at the Same Time, Presume to Impose upon Him: But, Because, II.

He Gave Himself up for Our Salvation, to All the Evils which It was Possible for Him to Undergo, Sin only Excepted, He would not have This Instance of Temptation, which is the most Ungrateful and Dangerous Trial to his Servants, to be Excepted; Nor that we should Complain, that, He, having made Himself Our Companion and Fellow-Traveller in Afflictions, should have Forsaken us In This: From Hence It is, That He not only Concealed His Divinity; But the Glories Also, of His Blessed Soul, from this Angel of Darkness; who would never have Dar'd to Attempt Him, Had He Known Him; For He Knows that the Happy are not Capable of Being Seduced; He was very Sensible that He had an Unlimited Power to Assault The Blessed *Jesus*, as to His Outward Person; And That This Concession of His, was not without some Restriction In Respect to other Men, Even the Most Holy: He Observed, Also, in the Son of God, so Great a Purity of Soul, that He hardly knew which Way to Attack Him; But His Pride had so Blinded Him, that he could not Conceive How a God, who had Taken the Human Nature upon Him, should Condescend so far as to Suffer Himself to be Tempted; And He suppos'd that Those Divine Graces which were so Eminent, and Shone so Illustrious, In the Blessed *Jesus*, were Acquired Accomplishments or the Illapses of the *Holy Ghost*; And not Essential, or Natural Perfections: However, He Conjectur'd that there was something of Divine, In Him; And 'twas this made Him so Invidiously Zealous to find out the Truth. And Therefore He Presented Himself Before Him, In the Shape of an Inhabitant of that Wild; And

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took Occasion from the Hunger and Faintness that He Perceived, in Him, to Accost him, and Compassionate His Distress; And, doubtless, He minded him of the Divine Favours He Had Received but a Little Before at the River *Jordan*, when God, by a Voice, from Heaven, Called Him His BELOVED SON; He Represented to Him, that He who Made the Waters Flow out of the Stony Rocks, to Quench the Thirst of his People, would Easily Change the Stones Into Bread, to Assuage the Craving Hunger of his Son, If he would but Ask the Favour: In short, THE DECEIVER forgot Nothing that might Conceal his Malice; Represent Him Under The Counterfeit of a Good and Charitable Man! And Thereby, to Give a Sanction and Authority to his Artificial Deceits.

III. The Holy Fathers, make several Interpretations Upon The Temptations of Our Blessed Saviour, In the Wilderness.

Some, Compare Them to Those of Our First Parents, In the Earthly Paradise; And say, That Our Blessed Saviour was, First, Tempted with *Gluttony*; to Expiate the Luxuriance and Wantonness of the Falling *Adam*, who had thereby Drawn upon us so much Misery, and Evil: In The Next Place with *Vain Glory*; to Repair the Ambition of that Aspiring Woman *(Eve)* whom Nothing Less would Satisfie, than to Become Like God! And, at Last, with *Covetousness* and *Idolatry*; to Attone for Those Two Great Evils, which had Tainted and Deprav'd the Universal World.

Others Affirm, that the Manner, after which The Blessed Jesus was Attackt, by *That Evil One*, Represents the Deplorable Condition of

Those, who suffer Themselves to be Vanquished By Him; For, By his first Temptation one may Discover the Infatuation and Blindness of Carnal Men, who Indulge Themselves in Luxuriance and the Gross Entertainments of this World, which can Never Satisfie a Soul Created for the Pure Enjoyments of the Celestial Paradise, no More than a Stone Can Afford Nourishment to the Human Body.

By the Second Instance of our Blessed Saviour's Temptation, we may see that the Highest Pitch of Secular Glory, to which the Proud and Ambitious Worldlings Labour so to Advance and Raise Themselves, serves to No Other Purpose than to Precipitate Them, Afterwards, Into an Abyss of Disgrace and Confusion: And the Third Teaches us, That the Exorbitant Love of Riches, is, According to the Expression of the Apostle, A Real Instance and * *Act of Idolatry*; Since the Covetous Man Looks upon his Self, and Adores it as his God.

* Eph.

Others Add, that the Words which Our Blessed Saviour made Use of to Resist the Devil, Are a Most Irresistable Defence, and Armour, Proof Against all sorts of Temptations; And a most Secure Means to Bring Back Those Souls that are Gone Astray, Into the Way of Salvation; But Because this Subject is of a very Large Extent, we will Content Our Selves to take Notice In this Place, with many Other Fathers, That *Satan*, Ever Industrious and Watchful to do us Mischief, Carefully Observes the Bent of Our Inclinations, That he may Deceive us Under the false Appearances of Vertue, if He finds us Well Disposed; Or Assist us in our Projections, if we are Propense to Evil; That He

He Conceals His Designs and Ambushes; And when He finds all the Avenues of Our Hearts shut up against Him on the One Side, He takes upon Him The Shape of an Angel of Light, and Counterfeits God's Grace, That he may the more Imperceptibly Enter into the Soul: He Enquires whether It does not Desire them with Restlessness and Impatience; Whether it Tasts them with Diffusion; Whether It Receives them with Ingratitude; Whether it Retains Them as its Own; And Whether It Expresses any other Sign of Imperfection, By which He may Infuse his Poyson; And So it was, that He not being Able to find the Least Passage into the Soul of the Blessed *Jesus*, Because of the Most Admirable Purity of His Disposition, made use of His Own Essential Vertues to Tempt him by.

IV. It is the Property of Perfect Vertue; And Above All, of True Charity and the Sincere Love of God, to Inspire us with an Entire Trust and Confidence in Him; To suffer Nothing to Remain, within us, that May, Possess or take up any Part of Our Hearts from Him; And to Dispose us to Abandon, all Accidents of Our Life, and Give 'em all up to the Dispensation of The Divine Providence: Such was The Inward Disposition of St. *Paul*, The Hermit, whom Almighty God by a Perpetual Course of Miracles, Supported In the Wilderness; for Four and Thirty Years together: And such the Disposition of Many Other Saints, who have Liv'd under the Natural Ministrations of The Divine Providence: For, God is Faithful, and he will Never let Those to Want any Thing Who put Their full Trust and Confidence in His Mercy.

But This Complete and Perfect Resignation is A Degree of Vertue, So very Refined and Sublime, By The Resemblance It has to the Life which The Blessed Spirits Above Lead In that Happy World, That, Although, we Ought to be Bearing, as much as is Possible, Towards It, Yet It's Certain, that There are but A Very Few, Of the Elect, whom God has Call'd to this Perfection, by The Almighty Influences of His Attractive Graces: For when He has, at Any Time, Introduc'd A Chosen Soul Into this Happy Region of Peace and Rest, Himself Becomes Its Guardian to Conduct and Keep It; He, far Removes All The Inchantments of Error and Mistake from Thence, He Takes Away All Manner of Concern or Trouble About this World, that Might Possibly Ruffle or discompose the Mind; Insomuch That Such A Soul, Being full of God, Wholly taken up with Him, and Abstracted from Every Article of The Creature, Never Troubles It Self, as to its Temporal Concerns, Whether there be Any Divine Regard pay'd to That, Any Providence or no, to Care About Them: But They who, Of Themselves Enter Into this Divine and Heavenly State; And, from Such Small, and Weak Foundations Raise Such A Magnificent Superstructure, Are Exposed, and Obnoxious to the most Fatal and Dangerous Relapses; Because They Have not Received the Necessary Means of God's Assisting Grace upon which to Rely, And therefore, These, Leaving their Proper Callings, And the Necessary Concerns of their Vocation, Instead of finding that Peace and Quiet They Propos'd, fall Into great Trouble and Disquiet, And the Snares of the Devil.

And

And Therefore It was, that This Fiend of Darkness, taking Notice how The Blessed *Jesus* Liv'd so Long without Any thing to Support Him; That He Receiv'd no Sustenance or Succour from Any Living Creature; That No Angel was Sent from Above to Minister Unto Him, and Refresh his Soul, as In the Case *Elias*; That He was not Mounted by any Glorious Solemnity Like *Moses*, whilst He Continued His Fast upon the Hallowed *Sinar*; He Concluded that This must be Some Eminent Saint; And that He must Play his Hellish Treachery upon Him, In the same way that He Attach's the Rest of Mankind; He Immediately, therefore, Began to Try If it were not Possible for Him to Bring The Holy Jesus Into A Distrust of Gods Providence; And, By that Means, throw him down Into A State of Presumption; by Endeavouring to Insinuate Into Him, that After so Long A Feast, He Deservedly might Expect to be Refresht by means of Some Miraculous Operation; This, Was An Insinuation Very finely Drawn, And Very Dangerous at Such A Juncture; For, It Lookt as if It were Better for Him to Expect, with Confidence, that God should do A Miracle to Subsist Him under Such A Pressing Necessity, Than that He should Go About to Seek Any Human Subsistence: Although It be most Certain that We Ought Always, In Such Cases, And Under A Sense of Our Own Unworthiness, to have Recourse to those Common and Ordinary Means which Providence has Appointed us; And that It Would be to Subvert The Rules of Charity, to Pretend to, or Expect Our Corporeal Subsistence, from The Merit of Any Spiritual Confidence, or Unactive Dependance

dance upon God for it, Without Using the Means which He has Prescribed In The Common Course of Things.

The Design, of THAT DECEIVER, when He Said to Our Blessed Saviour, *Command These Stones that They be Made Bread*, was To See, If He Would Command Things Into Being, As God did * when *He Spake The Word and They Were Made*; or Whether, Being No More than A mere Human Creature He Could Obtain A Miracle by the force of A Prayer; Or, Lastly, Whether He Would, In So Great An Extremity, Maintain That Perfect Confidence and Trust In God, Which is The Certain Result of The True Charity and Love of Him: But The Holy Jesus Frustrated His Artifice, and Rendred All his Designs and Malicious Flourishes Vain and Insignificant; And Broke All The Measures of This Wily Spirit, by that SingleReply, when He Told Him * *That Man does not Live by Bread Alone; But By Every Word that Proceedeth Out of The Mouth of God.*

* Ps. 148. 5.

* Deu. 8. 3.

This is what *Moses* Told The *Israelites*, when He Made it Appear Plainly before their Eyes, That Their First Concern Ought to be, *To Fear God; And Keep His Commandments*: He Represented to Them, How that for Forty Years Together, They had been fed with Manna, That Bread from Heaven, In the Midst of That Barren Wilderness, Where they Could Find No Meat; And That we Can Never fail of what is Necessary for us, when we have A True Faith In God, And Trust to His Providence, who, Whenever He Pleases, Can Preserve The Life of Man with the Usual Refreshings of Common Aliment and Provision; And, In This Sense,

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Our Blessed *Saviour* Answer'd *Satan*; Telling Him that He had No Need of This Miracle, Since God had, Already, Preserv'd Him, So Long Without Bread: From whence we Must Conclude, that It is Unworthy A Soul Capable of Enjoying God, and Eternal Happiness, to Trust More, or Place A Greater Confidence In Earthly Things than The Divine Providence, which Rules and Maintains The whole Creation.

The Two other Instances of Temptation, Also, Tended to Destroy the Foundation of Perfect Charity: For, The Devil, taking The Blessed *Jesus* to be No More than a Mere Charitable Soul, Carried Him upon the Pinnacle of The Temple; Pretended that He was Edified, by so Great a Confidence in Almighty God; Exhorted Him to Persevere in it, Telling Him that The Servants and Children of God, had Nothing to Fear; And that No Harm Could Come to Them, since it is Written, * *He shall Give his Angels Charge Over Thee; And They shall Bear Thee up, in their Hands*, &c. And that under this Assurance He might Cast Himself down from The Pinnacle of The Temple, but that He should be Supported in His Precipitation as well as He was in His Ascent Thither. It is not Credible that This Evil Spirit had Assumed a Strange Body; Nor that He had Mounted up Our Blessed Saviour to that Height with his Hand; But He Raised Him to that Summit, by an Invisible Power; Such as Spirits have Over Material Bodies. Now The Particular Intention of This Temptation was to Inspire The Holy *Jesus* with an Esteem of Himself, and an Assurance in his Own Strength, in an Affair of a Precipitate and Rash Nature, from which there Could

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* Ps. 91. 11, 12.

Could be Nothing done to God's Glory, But, on the Contrary, His Power would be Tempted Therein.

Satan had been Sufficiently Apprized, by his to own Fall, that Nothing is more Displeasing Almighty God, than Self Esteem; He was Chafed to meet with so much Opposition and Disappointment; And Could hardly Refrain Himself, or Keep on His Counterfeit Mask any Longer; as it Always happens to him, when Any one Repells him with Courage, and Exposes his Crafty Malice: But, Although, for fear of being Known, he had past Over the following Words of the same Psalm, * *Thou shalt Tread upon the Adder, and upon the Basilisk; And the Young Lion, And the Dragon shalt* Thou *Trample Under Feet*; He was not, for all That, the Better Conceal'd; And Our Blessed Saviour Confounded Him, by Saying, † *It is Written Again,* ‖ *Thou shalt not Tempt the Lord thy God*; And shews us, at the same Time, How Far, that Perfect Confidence and Trust in God, which Proceeds from Pure Love, should Extend; For, when This Divine Principle is Once well Grounded in the Heart, A Man Gives up Himself Entirely to the Directions of the Holy Ghost; But, This He does with so much Diffidence in, and Contempt of Himself, that all the Glory of it, shall Redound to God: He Obeys him with an Humble Spirit, without Presumption, without Precipitation; And Prepares himself for all the Vicissitudes and Changes of the Divine Providence, without Discomposure, or the Least Ruffle of that Interiour Application, by which He is United to Almighty God; *Our Grand Enemy*, Ever Raises his Greatest Battery here,

* Ibm. v. 13.

† St. Mat. 4. 7.

‖ Deut. 6. 16.

Using

Using his Utmost Endeavours to Disturb This Unison and Order, by withdrawing the Soul from this Sacred Intercourse, By setting it on Work about its Own Self Concern.

Then, full of Rage and of Pride, He took off his Mask, and Chang'd All his Counterfeit, and Dissimulation, into Right down Impudence. Almighty God Permitted Him thus far, to Confound this Proud Spirit; and to shew us, That, after he has in Vain, spent all his Artifice and Doubling, against any Person, who Proves Constant and Faithful under Temptation, He No Longer keeps within Bounds; But at Last, Attacks Him Bare-fac'd; Which shews us, How much More Prudent, an Humble Servant of God is, Than His Enemy, who, by Opening Himself, Looses his Advantage, and Renders Himself to be, the more Easily, Overcome. VI.

He *Wafts the Holy Jesus*, then, *Into the Top of An Exceeding High Mountain*; And, *In An Instant, Giving Him A Prospect of All the Kingdoms of the Earth*, (Doubtless in an Imaginary Idea) *And All This Power*, Says He, *And All the Glory of These Kingdoms will I Give Thee, If Thou wilt fall down and Worship Me*: I am The Lord of them All; No One is more Worthy of 'em, than Thou art; and it would not be just, that You who are Capable of Ruling the whole Universe, should Lead a Private Life. By This Means, the Tempter Endeavour'd to Cast some Seeds of Pride into the Heart of the Meek and Humble *Jesus*; A Weak Attempt of an Enemy already Discovered, who, Dispairing of the Conquest, Lays Hold, without any Regular Projection, on any Thing that Comes Next to Him. But this very same Temptation, Oftentimes

times Attacks the Servants of God, in a third Masquerade Address; when seeing Plainly the Corruption of the World, They Think Themselves Capable to Reform it; Set Themselves about it without any Call or Commission Thereto; and so without doing any Manner of Good to Others, Lose that Secret, Inward Peace and Tranquillity, which the Good Providence of God has Offer'd to Them.

A True Principle of Goodness Never Possesses the Righteous, with the Notion of their being the Proper Instruments, for those Undertakings, to which God has Not Commission'd Them: They do not Look upon themselves to be any farther Capable, in these Matters, than as they are Govern'd, Instructed, and Supported by The *Holy Spirit*.

Our Blessed Saviour No Longer Suffer'd the Insolence of this Malicious Fiend! He Commanded Him to be Gone; saying, * *Get Thee Behind me Satan; For it is Written, Thou shalt Worship the Lord thy God; And, Him Only shalt Thou Serve.* After which, The Angels of God drew Near to Minister unto Him, and to Congratulate his Victory; But *Satan* Knew not Even *Then*, that the Blessed *Jesus* was In Truth, *The Son of God*; For this Method of Overcoming Temptation, was Common, and the Way, which Good and Vertuous Persons always Practise.

*St. Mat. 4. 10.

VII. But these Words which Our Blessed Saviour Made Use of, to Drive away This Enemy, Plainly Evince, how Very Efficacious and Forcible a Steddy and Unshaken Resolution is, to Crush the Endeavours of an Adversary, who Cannot Conquer us without Our Own Consent.

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From Hence it is that He Labours with so much Artifice and Cunning to Gain it; First, He Begins by Only Desiring to be Heard; After That, He Brings us to Reflect on what He Suggests to us; And to take Pleasure in the Idea's of it; And, *Then*, One has more Difficulty to Avoid the Occasion of it. The Faculties of the Soul, By Degrees, Weaken and Grow more Enervate; The Awe and Respect of God's Presence wears off; The Will, at Last, Entirely Yields in Every Respect; And the Seducer Never Leaves it, till the Work is Done. The Experience of Sin, makes a Man The More Eager After the Repetition of it; The Frequency of Actions Grow up Into Habit, which is The Fatal Chain, so Difficult to be Broken, which Our Grand Adversary Makes Use of, to Draw us Into The Abyss of Hell: But when he meets with a Disposition Unshaken, and Resolv'd to Battle with Him, Deaf to his Insinuations; which, Immediately Opposes and Couragiously withstands Him, This Base and Cowardly Enemy is soon Repuls'd, And Never Can Obtain the Least Advantage.

Since a Soul Determin'd to Serve Almighty God, is so Strong and Powerful Against Temptation, It follows, That, If it Grows upon us, It is, Generally Speaking, Our Own Fault; For God, who by His Grace, Always, Supports Those, who In a Humble Manner Ask It of him, Knows, That The Temptation is not Above our Strength, But when the Will Grows Weak, and We don't Resist it in the first Beginnings.

Saint *Luke* Adds, that, **The Devil Withdrew from Our Blessed Saviour for A Time*; To Give us to Understand that He was Attempted afterwards,

**St.* Luke 4. 13.

wards; by *Judas*, and by the *Jews* who were the Instruments of his Rage and Malice; *His*, who Dared not to Attack Him, of Himself; Because He Could find No Passage into a Soul so Pure, and so Intirely Exempt and Free from the Rebellious Insurrections of The Flesh, which is the most Common Means He Makes use of, to Make us fall. So that Temptation was not, to Our Blessed Saviour, Eeither Dangerous, in Respect to its Consequences, or Difficult for Him to Resist: But what was Wanting in This Point, was Abundantly Supply'd by that Exceeding Disparagement of Him Self, In Permitting the most Abject of All Creatures to Contend with Him: He has Also, by This Means, Left This Comfort to his Faithful Servants, That They have Him for Their Companion, Even so far as The Vilest Attacks of Temptation; And, By an Admirable Contrivance of His Charity, He has Taught us, In his Own Example, The Manner How to Grapple with Our Enemies; And Given us the Power and Strength to Overcome Them.

VIII. It Seems as if Our Heavenly Father has Three Views In Suffering Mankind Ever to be Tempted. The One, to Try his Virtue; The Next, to Exercise It; And the Last, To Weaken, and Render Our Adversary Impotent and Unable to Hurt us,

For, First of All, God Almighty, Oftentimes Permits His Servants to be Tempted, That Their Virtue, which Remains Conceal'd, in a full Calm, May Shine forth, in The Glory of the State Militant; And that every One of Them, might be Sensible of his Own Strength or Weakness. A Quiet, Unmolested State, Commonly

Lays

Lays Vertue Asleep, and Shuts up it's Deficiencies in us, as well as its Lustre from the Eyes; Whereas Temptation Exposes Both the One and the Other to a Publick View. Thus *Abraham*'s Implicit Obedience Became so very Illustrious, By the Command which He Receiv'd to Sacrifice his Only Son; The Constancy and Steddy Patience of *Job*, in the Loss and Violent Privation of all He had; The Resignation of *Tobias*, when the Beauty of all Earthly Images were taken from his Eyes; And the Little Courage of St. *Peter* when he Denied his Master. It's Thus, Also, that The Humility of The Blessed *Jesus* Appear'd in all His Works, and in the Affronts He Bore; The Sweetness of his Meek Soul in their Contradictions of him; His Insuperable Puissance, in his Pains and Labour; His dear, Inseparable Love in his Sufferings for us; And all Those Other Vertues, which were so Eminently Bright, in him, in Every Instance and Opportunity, wherein he could set Them Open to the View of Men, and which He Practis'd, not for his own Wants, But for Ensamples, And for the Sanctification of Men.

Secondly, Temptation Exercises those Vertues we have Within us, in Order to Improve Them; And In Our Blessed Saviour, They were Design'd to Teach us The Purity and Perfection of 'em; For as They Could Not be added any Possible Improvements to Those of The Blessed *Jesus*, He Practised them Only for Our Sakes; Therefore when the Seducer of Souls, finds that we Labour to Conform Our Selves to That Model, He Loses Courage; Because He Knows, In This Imitation, The Weapons are

Made use of, which have Conquer'd Him Already: But if He Observes any Negligence on Our Parts, If He finds us Indolent and Lukewarm In Our Religious Conflicts, He Makes his Advantage of Our Weakness, and Attacks us with Success.

In the Last Place, The Blessed Saviour Suffer'd Himself to be Tempted, to Debilitate and Weaken The Malice of Our Grand Adversary; Not by Totally Depriving Him of the Power, to Try us with Temptation; But, by Lessening that Title he had Acquired Against us, to Attempt us, Frail Creatures, with all The Powers of his Might. He has been Despoiled of this Pretention, Not by *Violence*, as St. *Leo* has Observ'd, But by *Justice*; For, in Procuring The Punishment of The Cross, for The Son Of God, who was Innocent and Immaculate, He has, by so Great a Crime, justly Deserv'd to Lose That Right he had over the Guilty; who Being Thereby, Deliver'd from his Tyranny, and Become again the Legitimate Heirs of the Eternal Kingdom, for which he has been Excluded, Defend, At Present, Their Inheritance Against That *Usurper*: Insomuch, that All those Stratagems, and Encounters of *His*, which Mankind Underwent, Before, as a just Judgment for their Sins, are at Present, Chang'd into the Seeds, that, In a proper Soil, will Grow up to Glory.

*Serm. 1. de Quadrag.

It's This, which made St. *Eusebius*, Bishop of *Emesus*, to say, That The Condition of *Satan* is Very Miserable, since all his Mallice Becomes to the Servants of God, The Certain Means to Obtain That which his Envy and Hatred would Take from Them; And That the Violence

Violence he uſes Againſt Them, Enriches the Church with Merits: Accompliſhes and Perfects Souls with Vertue; Crowns the Labours of the Juſt; and Fills the Manſions of Heaven with Confeſſors and Martyrs. But, We muſt Acknowledge, Likewiſe, that Thoſe are Yet More Wretched, Even than He, Who Yield and ſuffer Themſelves to be Vanquiſht, By an Enemy, already Diſarmed; Who, Willingly, Give up their Necks again to the Yoak, from which They have been Deliver'd; Who Furniſh Him with Arms to Fight Againſt Themſelves withal, which The Bleſſed *Jeſus*, The Captain of Our Salvation has Taken from Him; Who Allow Him Room to Triumph In Their Fall; And In a Word, Who Thereby Forfeit Thoſe Eternal Treaſures and Rewards, which, The Redeemer of the World has Purchas'd for Them, with his Blood.

A

Divine Contemplation,

Upon The Temptation of Our Bleſſed Saviour In The Wilderneſs.

O Lord, God Omnipotent! Whoſe Infinite, Almighty Power, is Chiefly Apparent, In Pardoning and Forgiving Sinners, whom Thou haſt Created after Thine Own Image! 1.

* *According to The Greatneſs of Thy Mercies, have Compaſſion upon me!* Grant that Theſe, Our *Pſ. 51 1.

Hearts of Flesh, or Rather of Earth and Ashes, May be Enamour'd of Thee, above all other Things; And That We may Arrive at That Kingdom of Exceeding Great Rewards, which Thou hast Promised to Them that *Love Thy Appearance*! For Since They surpass all Our Desires, They well Deserve Our whole Heart! The Greatest Effort of Thy Puissant Force; Does its All-Powerful Energy Appear Strongest In The Creation of such Bubbles and Shadows as We Are, or in Punishing such Frail Creatures! Nothing, In Nature Opposes Thy Will; Thou Canst Reduce us Into The Number of Those Things which *Are Not*; And, with Justice, Cast Those Degenerate Creatures Into Destruction, who have, so Unjustly, Offended Thee, without any Possibility of Resistance. But, to Break the Obdurancy of my Harden'd and Ungrateful Heart; To Stop the just Accusation which Thy Justice Urges Against me, To shew Mercy In Forgiving a Wretch, who is Altogether Unworthy of it, This Requires Omnipotence It Self; And, as Thine is such, Thou Canst Work in me, what Thou Pleasest, without Ingaging Thy Justice; And without the Destruction of Thy Creature.

O Almighty Majesty, Before whom The Angels fall Down and Tremble; Who is so *Great* a *God* as Thou Art; So *Mighty* and *Puissant* as Thy Self! Who, is There so *Just*! Who so *Merciful* as Our God; Ever Blessed be Thy Name, for The Faith Thou hast Given me, By which I Acknowledge Thee to be my God! For That Hope and Assurance which Thou Inspirest me withal, By which Thou Obligest me to Expect and Wait for Thine Eternal Treasury,

And,

And, for That Charity which Disposed Thee of thy Goodness, to set my Soul on Fire, and Kindle in my Heart that Living Flame, with which I am Devoted to Thy Love with all the Powers and Faculties of my Soul.

But, It Depends upon Thee O Lord, who Canst do whatsoever Thou Pleasest, to Imprint upon my Soul the Marks of Thine Almighty Majesty; Thou, in Thy good Pleasure, Canst Lighten my Blindness; Strengthen me in my Weakness; Replenish me with Thy Grace; Reduce me Into Thy Perfect Obedience; And To Raise me out of The Mire, Even Into The Participation of Thy Glorious Essence. Speak then, Most Puissant *Jesus*! Most Merciful Redeemer! Say The Word, to This Leper; To This Wretch; To This Sinner: Dispose My Heart to Understand Thee, O Word Eternal! Say Thou, Only, I WILL, And I shall be Healed; I shall be Strong; I shall Love Thee! I shall Imitate Thee, In Truth; For *There is No Word Impossible Unto Thee!* II.

The Mighty Things, which Thou hast Done, on my Account, Because of Thy *Good-Will*, Teach me, that I Ought to Hope for, and Expect, , from Thy Love, All that I have Need of! In Charity to My Soul, Thou didst Debase Thy self so Low, as to Take My Nature Upon Thee; *This Thou Didst*; *Because Thou Hadst A Good-Will Unto Me*; Thou Didst Consent to take The Form of *A Servant* and *A Sinner*; And to be Like me, In All other Things, Sin Only Excepted: Thou Didst Lay The Incumbrance of my Trespasses and Debts upon Thy Self; And, to Cancel That Obligation, out of Thy Exceeding Love, Thou Wouldst Instruct my

Ignorance, with Thy Heavenly Doctrine; Thou hast Over-come All Mine Enemies; Thou hast Taught me The Mystery of this Spiritual War, and the Manner how to Vanquish, and Over-come Them: Thou hast Abased The Majesty of Thy Divine Person, Even So far as to Suffer Thy Self, to be Affronted with Temptation, by *An Accursed Creature*, whom Thou hast *Reprobated*, for Ever; And who will *Hate Thee to Eternity*: Thou hast Suffer'd his Infernal malice to Attack Thine Immaculate Purity; Thou hast Permitted This *Fiend of Darkness*, to Transport Thee where He would; And to Come to That Degree of Impudence as to *Tempt Thee to Adore Him*; This must be said, Indeed, That He Knew Thee Not; But as for Thy Part, O My God! Who Sufferedst Him to do It, Thou Knowest, very well, Both Thine Own Majesty and His *Reprobate, Apostate Baseness*.

It was an Extreme Mortification to Thee, to See Thy Self, at the Time of Thy Passion, Buffeted and Despised by Common Executioners: Yet, Vile and Detestable as They were, Thy Charity Reached even unto Them; And All Their Barbarous and Inhuman Cruelty did not Hinder Thee from Praying for Them, and from Dying for Their Sakes! By Their Crimes They Put That Vertue In Operation, which Labour'd for Their Sanctification; They Shed That Precious Blood, with which *They were Cleansed*; And many, Even of Those who Assisted In Thy Bitter Shameful Crucifixion, Obtain'd Eternal Glory by Those Ignominious Spitting and Buffets, and Blood-shed They Made Thee Undergo; who, Being Converted by their Own Inhuman Guilt; Testified Thy Truth, and have

Given

Given Thee Their Life, After They had Concurred In Thy Death.

But Satan, Ever an Implacable Enemy to thy Love; And to thy Children; Always Inexpressible In his Inveterate Hatred; Stedfast and Obstinate In his Malice; Insensible to Thy Goodness; Unworthy of Thy Presence; How Is it, That Thou Didst Suffer Him to Presume Into Thy Sight? To Dare Open his Lips Before Thee; To Attempt thy Vertue, As He Attacks, and Endeavours to Deceive and Prevaile upon Sinful Men! How is It Possible that Thou shouldst Condescend to Dispute with *so Execrable An Apostate*! How! That Thou shouldst Design to Allow *That Old Dragon*, That *Infernal Serpent*, After Thou hadst So Gloriously Vanquisht Him In Person, Still to Vent His Malicious Rage Against Thee, By his Hellish Instruments, Even so far as to Nail Thy Precious Body to The Cross; And Thereby, Give Him An Opportunity to Vaunt and Boast Himself, as if He had Frustrated The Designs of Thy Mercy and Goodness; And Taken Away Thy Life!

All That I can Conceive, from This, O My God, Is That It was Thy Pleasure That It should be so; And That *Thou* hast done it; And That what Thou hast Thus Permitted, and Engaged In, is out of thy Charity and Compassion, upon my Account. But The Reasons of This Thy Providence are Unsearchable unto Me; And Past finding out; They are All, A Mystery, and Lie Concealed In the Depth of Thine Unfathomable Wisdom; O most Gracious Lord! It is That, and Thine Inconceivable Love and Mercy that has Contriv'd and

Laid The Scheme of These Mysterious Designs and This Amazing Harmony of Thy Decrees, By which Almighty God is Glorified, And Mankind *Purchased to Salvation.*

III. What Hinders Thee, at this Present, Therefore, O my God! What Prevents Thy Goodness, to WILL; And Thy Omnipotence, to Perform what I Desire of Thee? Impart Thy LIGHT, Unto me; Communicate, Thy Love! Thy Purity, Thy Sweetness, Thy Strength; And Transform Thy Creature, poor and Abject Now, Into The Happy State Thou wouldst have Him In! If Thou, In Thy Goodness, findest Any just Reason, to Will and to Do Those Things which Seem So Distant from The Dignity and Glory of Thy Divine Majesty; Canst Thou find None, for That very Thing, In The World, which is The most Consonant and Agreeable to Thy Great Goodness; And to The Efficacy of An *Abundant* and *Plentiful Redemption?* That is to say, To Manifest the Glory of thy Omnipotency and thy Mercy, By Granting me Abundantly that which my Heart desires with so much Ardency and Fervour? It is True, most Gracious Lord! That I am not worthy of so Inestimable A Blessing; And Thou Canst find no Motive In me, to Induce thee to Comply with my Request; But Is not Thy Goodness Greater than my Unworthiness! And The Motives, Thou findest, In Thy Self, to Succour me; Are not They, Infinitely, of More Force, Then *Those*, Thou Findest In me, Are, to Abandon and Forsake me! Take Pity On me, Therefore, O my God! Because of Thine Own Mercy! And for Thine Own Sake! O! Help me; Heal me; Restore me; And Regenerate

generate me According to The Purity of Thine Own Immaculate Image and Goodness!

But Since I Know, My most Dear Saviour, IV.
both by Thy Word, and by my Own Experienc, That It is from Thy Self, Alone, That I Can, and Ought to Expect Those Great Blessings, which I have no Claim unto, from Any Merits of my own; Permit me, with an Humble Confidence, to Lay my Wants and Miseries, Before Thee.

Thou Seest O Lord, that If *The Grand Adversary of Our Souls*, has been so Presumptuous, as to Attempt Thine Incomparable Sanctity, Over which He had No Power; But, on The Contrary, He had so much Reason to Dread, and be Afraid of; If He had The Confidence to set upon such Pure, Immaculate Innocence; So Invincible A Power! A Virtue so Consummate, and Accomplisht; If He was so Daring, as to Oppose Thine Eternal Purposes and Decrees, Under A Vain Presumption to Frustrate and Overthrow Them; What is It that He will not Undertake Against so Frail and Impotent a Creature as I am; Born in Miseries, Plung'd in Mire, and Cover'd with Corruption!

Thou Knowest, O Lord! That This *Roaring Lion* Never Sleepeth; That He is *Continually Seeking to Devour Me*; That He Forgets Nothing that may Mischief me; That He Intimates Himself Every Where; That He Is Incessantly Seducing me Into Sin; That He Corrupts and Depraves that Little Good I do; And, That He is Ever Watchful and Attentive to Set His Gins in my Way, and Plant His Snares to Entrap me: I am not Secure from His Suggestions Even in my Sleep; No More than when I

am

am Awake; He Plays His Force upon Me, at All Times, and upon All Occasions; Sometimes He Transforms Himself Into *an Angel of Light*; Lurking Under The Appearance of Virtue; Couchant in my Own Appetites and Senses, And, Oftentimes, Even under a Shew of Thy Graces: He Pushes upon me Every Where, and All Ways; Within and Without; Both in Good and Evil; In Labour, and at Rest; In Prayer, and at Work; Insinuating Himself so Secretly and Insensibly into My very Thoughts, My Wishes, and Affections, that I do Not Perceive Him.

When He Cannot Prevail with Me, to Offend Thee, He Assaults and Vexes Me with his Temptations! He Tires me with his Importunities; He Staggers Me with Dangerous Images and Ideas, with which he fills my Mind: He, Then, Redoubles his Rage and Envy Against Me, to Rob me of the Happiness he has Lost; He Calls all the Furies of Hell, to his Aid, and Assistance; The Pomps and Vain Glories of the World, the Inclinations and false Bias of Corrupt Nature; Contagious and Fatal Examples; The Various Accidents of Life; The Very Sins which Thou hast Already Forgiven; And Thus, He Opposes me to Thy Mercy.

Ever Since I was Born have I had This Enemy at my Elbow; Even when I Knew him Not, he was Near to Me; And the Deepest Wounds he has Given me, were, Often, Those, that I the Least Felt or Perceived.

O Divine *Jesus*; My Strength and my Hope! What shall a Feeble, Miserable, Stupid Creature do, Against so Powerful and Subtile an Enemy!

Enemy! Who am I, to Maintain so Unequal and Dangerous an Engagement! To whom shall I have Recourse in so Cruel and Continual a Warfare.

I Know that Thou wilt Never suffer Mine Enemy to Tempt me above what I am Able; That I shall, Always, Conquer him, By the Assistance of thy Grace; That I shall Reap Great Advantage from This Victory; And This is It, which Renders me Inexcusable; I Acknowledge and Confess This, Before thy Mercy Seat; Not with any Intention to Justify my Self Thereby; But to Own my Misery; and to Implore thy Succour and Assistance; O God of Goodness! By whose Patience I am still Alive; Who so Forbearest me, and Waitest so Long for my Return! Thou Seest all the Advantages This Enemy Gets Over me; I Hearken to him; I Open the Doors of my Heart unto Him; I Entertain Him there; When, all this While, This very Heart is Bolted and shut up Close to Thee! The Easy Surrender he Meets with, makes him the More Sturdy to Undo me; And when I would Betake my Self unto Thee, he Encounters me still with the Greater Fury, Because I have Let Him In, and Yieled up my Self unto him.

I find my Self Weaker and Weaker, every Day I Live, since I have Wilfully Opposed thy Gracious Assistance; and I Acknowledge that my Weakness Proceeds from my Own Fault: For This Accursed Spirit, would have No Power Over me, If my Own Supiness and Negligence had Not given him that Advantage Over me: It is with Justice that he Becomes my Accuser, In thy Presence, O Thou ever Just, and V.

Im-

Impartial Judge! Because He Knows, He could Neither Vanquish me, Nor do me any Harm, Unless it were by my own Consent: But Alas! Wretched Creature as I am, I Give Both my Hands unto It; And by my own Choice, I Yield and Fall under his Malicious Power. He has Dragg'd me Into a Thousand Misfortunes; He Treats me still as his Slave; and, I can Blame None but my Self Alone for all This!

Shall I Continue Helpless, and without Redress, In thy Sight, O my God, who Art an Ocean of Mercy? Why art Thou My Redeemer, If it be not to set me Free! Why art thou my Supreme Good, if it be not to Deliver Me from All Evil? O Ineffable Goodness! Do Thou Sanctifie me; O Everlasting Sweetness! Forgive me Mine Iniquity! O Infinite Omnipotence, Free me; of Mine Enemy, and of My Self! Thou Knowest, O Lord, that He will Never Cease Persecuting me; That He will Bring me Into Irrecoverable Perdition! Defend me from This Roaring Lion! That He may Live without his Prey; And that I may be Shelter'd from his Fury *Under The Shadow of Thy Wings!* Remember that the End, of Thine Encounter with Him, was to Enable me to Overcome Him, By Vertue of Thy Strength; Fight with Him, then, Again, for Me, O Lord, and Do Thou, In me, Triumph Over This *Puissant* and *Malicious Adversary* of my Soul.

It's True, Thou hast Commanded me to Obey Thee, Alone; And, Only, to Adore and Worship Thee, My God; And Yet, I, Voluntarily, Submit to Him; I have Yielded up my Senses and my Appetites, which he has Rendered Rebellious, to Revolt and Act in Opposition

sition to my Self, and to Thee! And I have been More Complaisant aud More Attacht To Him, than Unto Thee my Beneficient God, and Redeemer!

Thou hast Forbidden me to be so Rash as to Tempt Thee; And yet I have the Presumption to Appear before Thine Eyes, Cloathed with The Livery of Thine Enemies; And the Tokens of My Vassalage; I have been so Mad as to Hope to Save my Self, whilst I was Travelling on In The Way of Perdition; I have often been Inclin'd to Mix The Pleasures of Sense, and The Suggestions of The Devil, with my Devotions; And, Because This Union was Impracticable, I Gave my Self a Loose to Run Into a Thousand Instances of Irregularity and Excess; And falling, Incessantly from One Sin Into Another, I Behold my Self, at Last, In The Jaws of The Deep Abyss, and at The Gates of Hell.

Behold, How Miserable I am! But * *Thou Art my God*; *And There is Mercy with Thee*; I have Erred from Thy Ways, *O Thou Good Shepherd*! I have Sinned Against Heaven, and, In Thy Sight, O Divine Jesus! See to what I have Reduced my Self! Thou hast Said That † *Man does not Live By Bread Alone*; *But by The Works of Thy Hands*; The Bounty of Thy Goodness; And The Sweetness of Thy Words: If Therefore, Blessed Lord! I Cannot Cease to be Thine; And If Thou art Wholly and Entirely My God; How is it Possible that I should Perish! Open Thy Treasures, O Thou Immense Goodness! Raise me Out of the Mire; Strengthen me Against mine Enemy; Forgive me my Past Infirmities, and Weakness;

VI.

* Ps. 130. 4.

† St. Mat. 4. 4.

nesſ; Reſtore me to Life and Vigour; And Grant that, for the Time to Come, I may Become *Thy Faithful Soldier and Servant*; And Behave with as much Courage and Reſolution, as I have Expreſs'd Lukewarmneſs and Cowardice Even to This Day.

But 'tis not Poſſible for me Either to Engage or Get the Victory without Thy Aſſiſtance; Thou art *my Chief*, *The Captain of my Salvation*; Thou, by Thine Amazing Humility, haſt Vanquiſh'd Mine Enemies, and, Thou haſt Left me, as it were, A ſhield that None of Their Darts Can Penetrate: I muſt Acknowledge, O my God! That I Cannot do any Thing without *This Divine Grace and Vertue*; And though I ſhould not Confeſs it; My Own Failings would Witneſs Againſt me, Since I am fallen, By my Pride and Vanity, *Into A Gulph of Miſeries*, from whence I Cannot Eſcape without Thy Gracious Aid and Aſſiſtance. My Preſent Inclinations are Never to Offend Thee More; And Never to Yield my Self up Again, to the Temptation of *my Grand Enemy*; But I am Very Senſible, at the Same Time, that I ſhall Never have the Power to Withſtand Him, Unleſs Thou doſt Graciouſly Interpoſe to Fight the Battle for me.

An

An Exposition

Of The Psalm, DE PROFUNDIS, *In A Form of Prayer Against Temptations.*

* *Out of The Depths have I Cried unto Thee, O Lord! Lord Hear My Voice.* *Ps. 130. 1.

I Acknowledge, O my God, that Thou hast Raised me Up to a Sublime and High Estate; That Thou hast Loved me, and Encompass'd me with Thy Mercies; But I have Plung'd my Self, and am Sunk Into the Mire of Earthly Appetites; I have Run into The Snares of Mine Enemies, In The Whirling and Impetuous Rage of my Miseries and Blindness; And Into The Deep Abyss of All Vices and Iniquity! I have Digged my Grave, and have Buried my Soul In *This Dark and Obscure Prison*; I have Fetter'd my Self In These Chains, which are such A Load upon me; And Distress my Soul so Sadly, That I cannot so much as Lift up Mine Eyes to Heaven, Nor Taste the Least of Thy Divine Graces! Thou Beholdest The Deplorable Condition I am In; And Thou Forbidest me to Despair: Under This Sense it is, that from the Deep Abyss of Darkness, Languishing, Consumed, And In Most Wretched State, I Presume to I. Lift

Lift up My Self, Even Unto Thee, O God of Mercy! My Hope, And of my Dejected, Blubber'd Eyes! Unworthy as I am of Thy Least Regard, or That Thou Shouldest Give the Least Attention to me, I Beseech Thee to Look upon me with the Eyes of Thy Goodness! And Hear the Grevious, Pitiful Cries and Lamentation which my Miseries Pour Forth Before Thee!

ii. *Let Thine Ears be Attentive to The Voice of My Supplication.*

THough I have been Always Deaf to Thy Voice; O do not Thou be so to Mine! And Let the same *Paternal Love*, By which Thou hast Commanded me to Listen Unto Thee, Prevail with Thee to Lend Thine Ear, at this Time, to The Supplication which I make to Thee! For if Thou of Thy Goodness, wilt Vouchsafe to Hear me; and if Thou shouldest Heal me, O most Compasionate Shepherd of My Soul, I shall be for Ever, Hereafter, Attentive to Thy Voice; I shall Faithfully follow at Thy Call, and Never Swerve from Thy Blessed Will.

If Thou, Lord, shouldest Mark Iniquities; O Lord who shall stand Thy Judgments! III.

IF Thou shouldest Enquire into The Multitudes and Aggravation of My Sins; If Thou Shouldest be so Strict to Require the Penalty They Deserve; What Hope Were There Left for Me! Can I find any Thing in me, wherewith to Attone and Satisfie Thy Justice, for All Those Trespasses and Debts I have Contracted by Mine Iniquities! Shouldest Thou Not, Therefore, Mitigate the Rigour of it, in Respect to my Poor Soul, Alass! what must Become of me? To whom should I Betake my Self! I am Undone Beyond Recovery; For I can Expect No Remedy to Heal me, But from Thee Alone, O my God, whom I have Offended!

But There is forgiveness with Thee. IV.

THE Forgiveness of Sins, Mercy, and Goodness Meet together No Where but in Thee; It is Thy Good Pleasure, that I should Not Expect My Cure from Any Other Hand but *That* which Might Afflict and Punish me; For Every Thing, Besides Thee, Lifts up its self in Evidence Against me; And justly Condemns Me; My Sins, My Ingratitude, Thy Gracious Benefits which have been Spent, IN VAIN, upon

me, Thy Law, which I have Violated, Thy Enemies whom I have Followed, All Thy Good Creatures which I have Abuſed, and Thereby Juſtly, Provoked Thee, All Theſe Require the Juſt Chaſtiſement I have Deſerv'd: I my Self, am my Own Greateſt Enemy; And my Conſcience Never Ceaſes to Accuſe, and Reproach me with All thoſe Evils that I have Committed.

Whither, then, ſhall I go to Seek Out an *Aſylum?* There's No Refuge to be Found, But in Thee, Alone, O my God! In That Patience which Bears Every Thing! In That Mercy which is All-Forgiving! Shouldſt Thou, Therefore, Shut up thy Fatherly Compaſſion Againſt me, There would Remain No More Subterfuge, No Place for Hope unto me, for Ever.

V. *I haae Hope In Thee, O Lord, Becauſe of Thy Law.*

THou Haſt Commanded me to Hope Always, In Thee, To Invoke Thy Goodneſs; And, to Betake my Self Unto Thee In All my Troubles! In Thy Great Compaſſion, Thy Juſtice Overlooks Our Human Frailties; Thou haſt, In Mercy, Engag'd Thy Self to Receive the Penitent Sinner, and to Forgive Him, Whenſoever He Sends up His Sighs and Groans towards Thy Mercy-Seat, and Makes his Sorrowful Complaint unto Thee! I ſet Before The

Thee, Gracious Lord, These Favourable Laws, This Endearing Covenant of Thine, Resting In A Faithful Assurance That Thou wilt not Revoke it. I Cast my Self At Thy Feet; I am Ready to Undergo All The Punishment I Deserve; And I Hope, From Thee, All The Mercy, that I have Need of!

My Soul hath Hoped In Thy Word; My Soul hath Put Its Trust In The Lord. VI.

THOU Art True, O Lord, and Thou Never Failest of Thy Promise; Thou Dost not Call us that We should Perish, But to Bestow Life upon Us! Thou Dost not Offer Thy Mercy and Forgiveness, to Refuse it Those who Return Unto Thee; But that Thou mayst Receive Them, with Thy Most Gracious and Fatherly Indulgence! It is In This Thy Word that my Soul Hopeth; And that *This Lost Sheep* Presumes to Return Into Thy Fold!

Let Israel *Hope In The Lord, from The Morning Watch unill The Night.* VII.

OR, According to The Hebrew Version, *My Soul Waiteth for the Lord, More Than they that Watch For The Morning.* As the Sentinel, Who Has Been upon The Guard,

Expects the Morning with Impatience to be Relieved from the Fatigue of the Night-Watches; So My Soul Supports It Self, In the Hopes and Expectations It has in Thee! When I am Overshadowed with the Cloud of My Sins, and Encompass'd with the Danger of Temptations; I Hearten My Self in the Expectation of Thy Presence, which Alone Can Revive my Drooping Spirits, And Fortifie My Weakness! I then Hope to be Cheer'd with the Refreshings of Thy Light; To be Supported by thy Strength and Energy; And to be Enabled to Resist and Vanquish Mine Enemies by Thy Succour and Assistance: For, If Thou Visitest my Soul, All Its Clouds and Darkness Vanish; All Its Enemies Flee Away; Its Sins are No More Seen; And Thou Wilt Give me a Constancy, Necessary to Enable me to Persevere In the Night of Tribulation, If Thou Permit, that It Return.

VIII. *For, The Lord is Full of Mercy; And In Him There is Plenteous Redemption; And He shall Deliver* Israel *from All His Iniquities.*

THE Treasures of Mercy are in Thy Hands; And These Liberal Hands are Always Open to Shower Them Down: For, Since

Siuce Thou haſt, Once, Reſolv'd to Cure me of my Evils, What is it that Thou haſt Spared for my Redemption ! Thou haſt Beſtow'd, upon me, All Thou hadſt ; Thou Haſt Promis'd me All that I can Deſire ; And haſt provided for All my Wants ; Thou Haſt Encompaſs'd me, On Every Side, with Thy Goodneſs ; Thou Haſt taken my Miſeries upon Thy Self ; Thou Haſt Poured out *Thy Precious Blood* ; Thou Haſt Sacrificed Thy Life for my Sake ; Thou Haſt Derived Thy Merits upon me ; Thou Haſt Overcome All Mine Enemies ; Thou Haſt Opened the Gates of Heaven to me ; And made me An Inheritor of all the Glories of Thy Kingdom : Finiſh Thy Work Within me, O Moſt Charitable Redeemer ! And Let Not the Temptations of Mine Enemies, nor the Frailty of my Fleſh Render me Unworthy of ſuch a Plenteous Redemption ; Snpport me by Thy Strength ; Protect me by Thy Mercy ; That I may Love Thee Always, Even unto the End, That I may Faithfully Oppoſe Every Thing that is Diſpleaſing to Thee ; Or that is Capable to Separate me from Thee, My God.

O Queen of Angels, Refuge of Sinful Souls ! The Faithful Miniſter and Diſpenſer of Divine Benefits ! Be Thou my Succour In the Time of Temptation ; Do Thou Bridle The Fury of *that Old Serpent*, Whoſe Head Thou haſt Bruiſed ! Scatter Thou the Powers of *that Infernal One*, who has Com-plotted My Perdition ; And Never Let me Give Place or Yield to his Attacks.

Ye Bleſſed Inhabitants of Heaven; Ye Triumphant Hoſt, Who Are Crown'd with Glory! Who have Experienc'd Our Dangers; And Who, Are Now Rejoycing In the Pleaſures of Eternal Reſt; Aſſiſt This Wearied Pilgrim, with Your Prayers, This Miſerable Traveller, who is Continually Expoſed to Shipwrack; And Inceſſantly Oppreſs'd and Beaten Down with the Waves of Temptation; That He may, One Day, Rejoyce, with You, and Enjoy The Fruits of Your Victory. *Amen.*

THE

THE Seventeenth Instance OF THE SUFFERINGS OF Our Blessed Saviour:

CHAP. XVII.

In The Vulgar, Illiteratenes of His Disciples.

OUR Blessed Saviour, after He had Vanquish'd and Overcome THE TEMPTER, had Yet A more Rude and Obstinate Encounter to meet with and Conquer; Against The World, Against The Errors and Malice which were Predominant Throughout the Universe. I.

He Began to Teach, In the Synagogues, to The Admiration of Mankind; And, Especially, of Those, who had been Acquainted with Him at *Nazareth*, and who always Looking upon Him as A Common Man, were Amazed at His Doctrine. After He had Determined to Make His Tour, thro' All the Towns In *Judea*, Preaching and Working Miracles; And to Shew Himself to The World, to Convince Them of Their Errours, And to Bring Them Back Into the Way of Salvation; He Chose Twelve Apostles, and Many Other Disciples, After He had Settled This Great Affair with His *Eternal Father* upon an High Mountain, where He Spent the Whole Night in Prayer; To Teach us, In the First Place, what Care He Took about the Things which Relate to Our Salvatiou; Next, Of Whom We Ought to Ask Counsel In All Our Affairs, which Cannot Happily Succeed if They are Not Concerted with God, And Undertaken by the Dictates of *His Holy Spirit*.

But Although the Evangelists have taken No Particular Notice of the Distinct Offices of their Vocation; It is Certainly True, that Our Blessed Saviour told Them, In His Discourse at His Last Supper, That He had Chosen Them to be the Princes and Governours of His Church.

* St. John 15. 16. *. *Ye have not Chosen Me*, Says He unto Them, *But I have Chosen You*; *And* ORDAINED *You*, *That You should Go*, *to Bring Forth Fruit*; *And that Your Fruit should Remain*. Besides These, Some Time after, He made Choice of Seventy and Two Other Disciples, whom He Sent thro' All *Judea*, with the Power of Working Miracles: He Commanded Them to Travel thro' All that Country,

Country, Declaring the Kingdom of God; And Healing the Sick, In All the Towns and Villages whither He was to Come After Them: Whose Orders they Executed With the Utmost Zeal and Faithfulness; And Those, Among Them, who Continu'd with the Blessed Jesus, till His Death, Were very Assisting to the Holy Apostles In Their Preaching of the Gospel: St. *Matthias* was Chosen from Among Them, to Supply the Place of *The Traytor Judas*; And They Filled the World with Astonishment at The Holiness of Their Lives; The Fruit of Their Labours; And the Fame of the Miracles that Were Done by Them.

St. *Paul* Exhorts us to Consider, as a Matter of Great Wonder, the Choice which Our Blessed Saviour Made of These Men, to Convert the World: † *Ye See, My Brethren*, Says He, *Whom God has Called Among You; How that Not Many* WISEMEN, *After the Flesh; Not Many* MIGHTY, *Not Many* NOBLE, *are Called: But God hath Chosen The Ignorant to Confound The Wise: He hath Chosen The Weak to Confound The Mighty; And The Base Things of The World hath He Made Use of; And The Things which are Not, To bring to Nought the Things that Are; That No Flesh should Glory In His Presence. But, of Him are We, In Christ Jesus, Who, of God, is Made, Unto us,* WISDOM, *And* RIGHTEOUSNESS, *And* SANCTIFICATION, *And* REDEMPTION; *That, according as It is Written, He that Glorieth, Let Him Glory In the Lord.* For Herein it is, that the Power of God is made Manifest, who has Raised so Magnificent A Building upon such Weak Foundations. II. † 1 Cor. 1. 26.

One of The Greatest Obligations, In which We are Indebted to Our Blessed Saviour, is, that

that He has Communicated His Gifts Gratis to Us, thro' ſuch Channels, that We may Carry Our Thoughts Thereby to the Fountain, from Whence All the Bleſſings we Receive are Derived; And Acknowledge the All-Bounteous Hand from which They Deſcend unto Us: By this Means He has Subverted and Brought to Nought All *Worldly Wiſdom*; And, Becauſe He Foreſaw that this Depraved World would not Submit to Faith; But Oppoſe, and Contradict His Divine Doctrine: He Contrived it ſo, that the Moſt Eminent for Wiſdom and Learning In that Age, Who Could Not, of Their Own Natural Light and Penetration, Come to the Knowledge of God, in The Myſterious Work of Our Redemption, Might be Enlighten'd by Thoſe who were of the Moſt Mean and Obſcure Condition, that is to Say, By a Set of Poor, Illiterate Fiſhermen.

But He Could not Bring About this Myſterious Paradox, without much Fatigue and Labour: For what Great Pains, and Exceeding Humiliation muſt He Needs take Upon Him, to be ſo Perpetually Converſant, with a Company of Men, So very Uncouth, Illiterate, and Ignorant, and Deſpicable, in Every Reſpect, as They Were? Who had No Qualification, in the World, Requiſite for ſo Great and Important A Work; Which, Conſequently, Oblig'd our Bleſſed Saviour, to be at Continual Pains, and Under the Greateſt Concern, With the moſt Indefatigable Patience, to Inſtruct, and to Poliſh, and Cultivate Theſe Rough Draughts of the Human Race, Thereby to Render Them Capable of Receiving the Plenarty and Fulneſs of the Holy Ghoſt.

It

It may, Possibly, Seem as if I were Injuriously Treating the Simplicity, and Plainness of The Apostolick College, in this Infancy of Their Commission, By Placing This Article in the Class of *The Sufferings of The Blessed Jesus*, Whom We Find Always Teaching Them with the Tenderness of A Parent to His Infant Children; And who Foresaw, that, After They had Received *The Gifts of the Holy Ghost*, They Would Labour In The Lord's Vineyard, Even so far as to Give up Their Lives As A Testimony to His Glory: But, Sure I am, that it Can be No Injury to Them, that I Represent Here, the Beginings, of Their Introduction Into this *High Calling*: And How much Pains and Labour their Education, and Building up, for it, Has Cost Their Divine and Heavenly Master: Since They Themselves Acknowledg'd the Same Thing, Afterwards, in Much More Lively Characters than I Can Possibly Express it: This very Consideration, Appears to have been a Continual Subject of Humiliation and Amazement to Themselves: They Were Ever Expressing their Astonishment at the Depth and Greatness of the Divine Mercy; Which had Raised Them Up, from so Low and Unqualified A Condition, to such A High Degree of Perfection: They Always Preserv'd and Expreſt a Tender Resentment and Humble Thankfulness to That Endearing God, Who had, with so Generous A Good Will, and Such A Fatherly Indulgence, Wink'd at, and Supported Them under Such Gross Imperfections, to Exalt and Bring Them Into A Capacity for such A Glorious Commission; Concluding that They could Never Sufficiently Compensate, Either

III.

Either by All the Services They Could Pay, By All The Labours and Difficulty They Could Undergo, No, Not Even, by the Shedding the Last Drop of their Blood for His Sake, the Great Pains and Labour they had Caused to Such A Loving, and so Indulgent A Father; But, Although His Paternal Love Soften'd in a Great Measure, the Trouble They Gave Him, In Bearing with Their Weakness; We are not, for All That, a Bit the Less Indebted to Him; But, on the Contrary, This Complacency, Proceeding from No Other Motive than the Exceeding Flow and Warmth of His Love, Heightens and Inhances Our Obligations to Him.

IV. The Son of God, Then, having Assembled some Disciples Together, who were, For the Most Part, Sinners, Sordid In Their Aspect, Of the Most Vulgar Souls, and Appetites; He Cherisht and Maintainld Them Like A Father; Instructed Them, and Taught Them as A Master, with All the Patience, which their Incapacities did Necessarily Require: For Their Vulgar Genius, Sordid as the Earth, They Trode on, Could not Reach Any Idea that was Sublime, or have Any Taste of Divine Things.

When The Blessed Jesus spake to Them, Concerning the Kingdom of God; They had No Other Notion, Concerning it, than of what Related to the Kingdom of *Judea*; And Each, of 'em, was Laying Out, how to Climb Into the Highest Rank There: Some, of 'em, Because they Were Called at the First Hour; Others, On Account of their Near Relation to Our Blessed Saviour, According to the Flesh;

All

All of 'em, upon Vile, and Base, and mere Human Pretences: And as These Sorts of Imaginations are Always Accompany'd with Many Other Failings, They, Flatter'd their Friends and Acquaintances with the Promises of Raising Estates, and High Posts and Places, and Introducing Them to the Royal Favours.

When Our Blessed Saviour Talk'd with them, about the More Sublime and Mysterious Points of Religion, At His Last Supper, when He Instituted The Blessed Sacrament of His Body and His Blood; They Cavil'd Among Themselves, Concerning Pre-eminence, and the First Place; They Made Use of the Interest of Friends, to Make their Way to what Their Ambition Aim'd at; And *John* and *James*, set their Mother a Work, to Demand the Highest Stations for Them: They Were Weak Men; They, Often, Stagger'd in the Faith: They Forsook Their Master, at the Time of His Passion; *Peter* Positively Deny'd Him; *Judas* Betray'd Him; The Others Doubted; And It was with Great Difficulty that They Gave Credit to His Resurrection: Even At that Very Time when He was Preparing to take His Final Leave of Them, and Make His Ascension Into Heaven, They were Still Possest with the Chimera of His Temporal Dominion.

Many of His Disciples, when They heard Him talk about Giving His Body to be Eaten, and His Blood to Drink, were Grievously Offended; And Several of 'em Went Away from Him Upon that Account: When, at His Last Supper, He Urg'd the Necessity of Putting On the Spiritual Armour, In Order to Encounter and

and Overcome Temptations, They Stupidly Anſwer'd, that *He had Two Swords There*; And, After They had Vow'd that They would Die with Him; At the Very Firſt Appearance of any Danger, They Unanimouſly Forſook Him and Ran Away: When they Felt Any Warmth of Zeal, Kindling within Them, they were Preſently for Fire to Deſcend from Heaven upon Thoſe who Refuſed their Doctrine; And when they Saw that Others Drove out Devils, In The Name of *Jeſus Chriſt*, They Foam'd with Jealouſy; And were Furious in their Remonſtrance: They Greatly Magnified the Failings of Other Men; Which Plainly Demonſtrated the Meanneſs and Servility of their Own Narrow and Beggarly Diſpoſition.

V. And Yet, Notwithſtanding All This, *The Bleſſed Jeſus* Bare With Them: He Generouſly Reprimanded Them; And Set Them Right with Such Gentle and Familiar Tenderneſs, as if Their Miſtakes had been but the Natural Failings of the Beſt of Men: He Treated Them as if They had been his Equals; He Let Them Into the Meaning, and Shew'd them the Reaſon of Every Article of His Conduct, as His Companions: He Defended Them, as His Children, Againſt Thoſe who Offer'd them Any Injury; He Open'd and Explain'd unto Them, The Wonderful Deſigns axd Purpoſes Of His All-wiſe Providence, And the Deepeſt Myſteries of His Kingdom, as to His Only Confidents, Although they took It All In the Moſt Literal Senſe, and After their Own Natural and Stupid Way of Conception: He took Them along with Him Whenever He made Any Publick Diſcourſes to the People; He Gather'd

Them

Them Together to Him, Before He Went to His Devotions; And, During That Sacred Exercise, Many Times, His Eyes were upon Them, When He Exhorted and Urg'd Them to This Holy Duty, and that They would be Constant and Persevere in it; And the Inexpressible Concern He had for Them Appeared In Every Action of His Life: If He, At any Time, Spake Abstruse, and In Parables to the Publick and, Under Those Figures, Conceal'd the Mysteries of His Doctrine, He, Afterwards, Gave Them A Particular Exposition of the Meaning of 'em; Demonstrating, Thereby, that They Were More Dear to Him than the Others: He Answer'd Their Questions, Rude and Unmannerly as they Were, as if They had been Drawn from the Nicety of Good Reasoning, and the Dictates of A Refined Sense.

Although Their Manners, Their Souls, Their Behaviour, were Entirely Opposite and Contrarious to His Infinite Wisdom, He Never Shew'd Them the Least Sign of Uneasinrss or Displeasnre; On the Other Hand, He Cover'd Over, their Failings; He Overlook'd and took no Notice of Their Ignorance; He Bore their Rudeness; And Sustain'd All the Weight, and Fatigue of A Conversation which Could not Possibly be Agreeable or Tollerable, But On the Account of That Inextinguishable Love He had for Them. In A Word, He Never Would be Without Them, but Kept Them Always, In His Presence; At his Table; In His Travels In Publick, and In Private; at Home, and Abroad; Until He had New-modeled, and Rais'd Them to A Degree and Station Eminent for Wisdom and Vertue. Upon this Barren

ren and Uncultivated Soil It Was, that He Cast In the Divine Seed, Which was, Afterwards, to Bring forth Fruit Even to An Hundred-fold, By the Influence and Operation of the Holy Spirit: And, Under All These Difficulties He Satisfied Himself, with the Expectations and Hopes of a Plentiful Harvest, that is to Say, with the Conversion of the World.

It Affords very Great Matter for Our Contemplation, to Behold, How The Eternal Wisdom Condescended to Converse, Amidst these Unpolisht, Sorry Creatures, and to Discourse with Them About the most Sublime and Mysterious Points of the Christian Doctrine; And Take so much Pains Among Them, to Give Them An Esteem and A Relish of Those Divine Truths, which, In A Single Moment, It Could have Fixt upon the Soul; As It did Afterwards In Those Miraculous Illapses of the Holy Ghost: Certainly, the Blessed Apostles Could Never Reflect, *Afterwards*, upon This Endearing Tenderness, of the Blessed Jesus, without the Utmost Passion of Love and Amazement. This very Consideration must Needs Humble and Enflame Them at the same Time; 'Tis Impossible to Conceive how Sweet and Pleasant it was to Them, Afterwards, to Spend Themselves In the Service of so Endearing A Master: And to Give up Their Blood, and Their Lives, for His Sake.

VI. The Conduct of Our Blessed Saviour Towards his Apostles is of A most Admirable Use and Instruction, to All Those who are Call'd to Labour for the Conversion of Souls. By His Divine, and Engaging Tenderness, He Accommodated His Zeal to Their Disposition; He Never

Never Press'd too far upon Them, Left He Should Confound Instead of Edifying Them: Nor Yet Aggravated Their Failings, Because they Rather Proceeded from Ignorance, and Simplicity, than from Malice; And that the Blessed Apostles, had not, as Yet, Received Sufficient Illumination, to Shew Them Their Errors, and wherein They Failed: But He Gradually, and Insensibly Inspir'd them with the Grace of Humility, whilst His Own Example Ever Accompany'd and Strengthen'd the Power of His Doctrine; And the Method He Made Use of, To Rectify Their Mistakes, was not By the Harshness of Any Rigorous Remonstrance; But, By the Winning Insinuations of His Agreeable Discourses.

He Knew that the Heart of Man is Not Capable of the Strong Impressions of Vertue and Religion, But when it is Inflamed with the Love of God: Like Iron, which is not Malleable, But Un-pliant, when it is not throughly Soften'd by the Forge: He Knew Besides, That One's Imperfections are more Strongly Seen thro' the Beauteous Objects of Vertue, than thro' Their Own Natural Deformity, which Discovers it no Farther, than in Proportion to that Measure of the Divine Love which is Implanted In us.

And Thus it is that We Ought to Behave Our Selves Towards Our Neighbour; Bearing with His Infirmities till He, Himself, Becomes Sensible of Them; And Yet, Leading Him, All the While, Into the Paths of Vertue: By this Means we shall Better Dispose Him to Receive Grace, whose Light will Discover to Him Afterwards, the True Price and Estimate of

*Isa. 29. 22. Every Thing. * Jacob *shall not Now be Ashamed*, Said the Prophet, *But His Face shall be Cover'd with Confusion, when He shall See His Children, which are The Work of Thy Hands, Sanctifie My Soul In His Presence:* Because the Time of His Confusion is not Yet Come, He Prizes Vanity; He Loves the Evil which He Commits: But when He shall Begin to be Dispos'd to Serve God Sincerely; He will, *Then*, have A True Sense of those Obstacles and Impediments He Made His Pretence to Sin; He will Blush at the Vileness of his Affection, and the Illusion of His Notions.

It Requires a Great Deal of Discretion, to Make the Best Advantage of these Conjectures, in the Management and Direction of Souls: * Psal. 6. 1. St. *Paul* Gave this Advice to the Perfect: * *If Any One has fallen Into Sin*, Says He, *You, My Brethren, who Are Spiritual, Admonish Him with The Spirit of Meekness; Considering Your Own Selves, Lest Ye Also, be Tempted:* And the Holy Prophet had Foretold of Our Blessed Saviour † Isa. 42. 3. That, † *He would not Break the Bruised Reed; Nor Quench the Smoking Flax*; For, altho' the Smoke is Inconvenient and Disagreeable, It, still, Leaves some Tokens, of the Remains of Fire within it; And, Prudent Charity, far from Extinguishing the Least Spark it finds, as One may Say, Blows it up Again, and Quickens it with its Breath, till it Increases to a Flame.

We Must, Nevertheless, Observe, that this Mildness is, Generally, of No Service to Those who Expect Always to be Spar'd, and Wink'd at, When They have Transgress'd, And that, with such as These, 'tis Requisite to use Something

thing of Severity, and A Stricter Discipline; Because, There Seems Something of Malice In Their Trespass; Whilst They, Knowing their Own Frailty, Testify, By This, that They Intend to Persevere Therein: There are Often such Sort of Spirits as These, to be Met with, even in Religious Communities, who would have Their Superiors Accommodate their Rule to their Fancies and Inclinations; But the Same Charity, which Inspires This Condescension for Certain Persons, who from their Natural Infirmities, can Raise Their Souls no Higher; Forbids the same Connivance Towards Those, who, By A too Great Over-weening of their Own Perverse Will, Render All the Duties of Obedience Difficult and Impracticable.

VII. That, which Ought Here to Comfort us In the Little Good we Do, is to Consider How The Blessed Jesus Accepted the *Services*, and the *Good-Will* of the Apostles, Altho' They were very Deficient and Imperfect, with as Much Generosity and Tenderness, as He did, Afterwards, Their Unparallelled Labours, and Most Heroick Actions; He Told Them, the Night Before His Death, * *I will Call You No More My Servants; For The Servant Knoweth not what His Lord Doth; But I will Call You* MY FRIENDS; *For, All Things that I have Hear'd of My Father, I have Made Known unto You.* And In Another Place, † *It is You who have Continued with me In My Trials from The Beginning.*

* St. John 15. 15.

† Ibm. v. 27.

Consider Who the Person is that Says these Things; And to Whom He Speaks Them: It is The SON OF GOD, who, Exprest Himself In Such Tenderness to Those who had Already

Shew'd so much Weakness, and were, That very Night, to Express so much More; He took Notice and Acknowledg'd the Smallest Actions, that had but the Least Shadow of an Imperfect Vertue In Them, to Let us See, that He Accepts, and is Ever Pleas'd with the Least Thing we do, for His Sake, when We Endeavour to Our Utmost, and Do what we Can; That, the Simplicity and Integrity of Our Intentions makes Him Excuse the Defects of Our Performances; That, the Smallest Instances of Good, on Our Part, are Sufficient to Draw Down upon us the Treasures of His Mercy; And, that in the Very Graces, which at Present, He Imparts unto us, He Views and Enjoys the Satisfaction, which He shall Receive from us Hereafter.

A Very Important Observation This, for Those whom God has Ordained to Bear Rule, as well as for Them whose Duty Calls for their Submission and Obedience: It is an Extreme Mistake, and the Greatest Imprudence In Superiors to Exact Every Thing from All Alike; And to Impose and Lay the same Burthens Equally upon the Weak, as on the Strongest: For, Thereby, They Destroy the very Principles and Foundations of Good Government; And It is A Lamentable Weakness and Indiscretion in Them whose Call it is to Submit to Authority, to Murmur and Complain that there is a Greater Weight Laid upon Them, than upon some Others who have Less Talents than Themselves: A Prudent Guide, therefore, Ought, Carefully, to Examin, Into the Capacity of His College, and Know How Much Every One Can Bear, According to his Strength, and

and in Proportion to the Gifts and Graces God has Bestowed upon Those Over whom He is, by the Divine Providence, become a Director, to Preside Over Them. He Ought to Bear with Those that are Weak; To Help Them in what They are Able to Go through; To Encourage and Exhort Them to Perseverance; And to Expect Nothing from Them that is Beyond their Strength; Otherwise He will Dishearten Them, Drive Them Into Desperation, and Make Them, thro' Despondency, to Quit those Faint Endeavours they Made before, and Lay aside the Encrease of Vertue, and so at Last All will End In their Ruin and Destruction.

The Blessed Jesus, Chose Rather, to Bear with the Infirmities of the Apostles, than to Make Them Perfect All at Once, for Two Reasons. VIII.

First, To shew us by Their Example, How Much Our Gross and Earthly Affections Prevent and Hinder the Communications of the *Holy Ghost*; The Gifts of Perfect Charity; And that Intimate Union with Almighty God, to which We are Called: For so Long as They were Engaged, by a Sensual Affection, to the mere Corporeal Presence of Our Blessed Saviour; They were Incapable of those Spiritual Impressions, and to Receive the Divine Light and Inspiration; And, therefore, it was more proper that He should Keep the Divine Influences of His Spirit from Them, till Their Souls were Purified to Receive It.

Secondly, Because They were Ordained for the Most Great and Important Concerns, for which They Wanted to Receive Extraordinary

Graces, They were Beforehand to be Exercis'd In Humility; That, Being Afterwards, Repleniſh'd with the Holy Ghoſt, They might Deſpiſe Themſelves, upon the Remembrance of Their Former Vileneſs, and Imperfections: It was Neceſſary for theſe Pillars of the Church of God, to have their Foundation Laid In an Humility Proportionable to Their HIGH CALLING; And there was Nothing more fit or Capable to Eſtabliſh This Vertue, In Them, than A True Senſe and Knowledge of Their Own Miſeries.

IX. And after this very Manner It is, that the Divine Wiſdom Exerts It Self, Towards Thoſe whom God Raiſes from the Sink of the Earth, and the Love of theſe Low Enjoyments, to the Contemplation of *Thoſe Inviſible and Eternal* Objects; He Bears with Their Frailties, Their Ignorance, Their Murmurings, and the Reſt of Their Imperfections: Somtimes He Comforts Them by His Preſence; And Afterwards He Afflicts Them, by the Privation of His Countenance: He Often Gives Them A Taſt of His Sweetneſs; And, Then Again, He Mortifies Them with the Terrors of His Spirit: 'Tis with Great Care and Providence, that He Raiſes Them to Their High Degree; He Supports Them, and Humbles Them; He Chaſtiſes, and Careſſes Them; He Reſtrains, and He Excites Them; Like A Father Full of Love and Goodneſs, who takes the Greateſt Pleaſure in the Education of His Children.

The Bleſſed Apoſtles were not the Only Objects of His Love and Paternal Goodneſs: He Alſo, Stretcheth Out His Arms to us All; His Power

Power is not Shorten'd; His Bounty is Always the Same; And He is under no Less Concern and Care, at this very Day, to Preserve and Continue His Holy Spirit in Every One of Us, than He was, One Time, to Cherish it In His Disciples: We Ought, Therefore to Maintain the same Sentiments of Gratitude to so Kind and Charitable a Father, as the Apostles did; And we shall be No Less Saints than They were, if Our Faith and Constancy be but as Strong as Theirs.

A

Divine Contemplation,

Upon The Patience of The Blessed Jesus, In Bearing with The Faults of His Disciples.

GIVE me an Inward Sense, O Lord, that I may know the Time wherein Thou wouldst have me Bless Thee! And Ingrave In my Heart all the Acknowledgments I Owe Thee for Thy Great Bounty; Thou Calleſt to us All; But who Can Come to Thee, Unless Thou dost Conduct Him! Thou Wouldst have all Men Love Thee; But who shall Possess that Noble Flame, Unless Thou dost Kindle it in His Soul! Thou Wouldest be Known by All the World; But who Can find Thee Out, without I.

out the Illumination of Thine Own Glory! The Want I have of Thee is Born and Grows up with me; The Mighty Obligations in which I ſtand Indebted to Thee, Preſs Continually upon my Soul; But I Can Only Satisfy for thoſe Infinite Sums, and Eternal Obligations, by Thy Self; So that Unleſs Thy Goodneſs Interpoſes; And, without Thy Help, and without Thy Grace, What is it that I Can Do? O, Thou God of my Soul! Caſt the Eyes of Thy Mercy, then Upon Me! Give me that Inward Underſtanding, that I may Hear Thy Voice; Imprint in me a Deſire to follow after Thee; With Fervency to Seek Thee, and the Strength to Bear on, till I Overtake Thee; Give me a Senſe of mine Own Infirmities, and Miſeries, that I may fear Them; And a True Idea of the Dangers of this Life, that I may Flee from Them.

I muſt Confeſs, O Lord, that I am not Worthy of the Bleſſings that I Ask for; That I Deſerve even to be Corrected, and to be Baniſh'd far from Thee, for Preſuming to Ask any New Favours of Thee, after I have ſo Abuſed Thoſe which Thou haſt Already Granted me, and Without having Allow'd for the Sins that I have Committed Againſt Thee: But the Sinners whom Thou haſt Received; The Crucified Thief, to whom Thou doſt Beſtow Thy Paradiſe; Thoſe Weak, Tranſgreſſing Women, whom Thou didſt Repleniſh with Thy Grace; Support my Confidence, and Give me Hopes, that Thou Wilt not Reject me; For They had Never been Converted, They Never would have Sought after Thee, nor Follow'd Thee,

Thee, Had not Thy Light and Thy Grace Secretly Excited them Thereunto.

Why should I not Expect Every Thing from Thee, Most Divine Saviour, Since, to make Thy Truths Known, Thou hast Sent, Not Blessed Angels from Heaven; But Unpolish'd, Frail and Sinful Men, in whom I Observe, No Less the Defects of Our Human Nature, than the Extraordinary Gifts and Illapses of Thy Grace! Such were Thy Disciples, at that very Time when They had the Honour of Thy Presence; Ambitious, Jealous, Vain, Wavering in the Faith, Full of Vile and Sordid Imaginations, and Earthly Affections: Yet, Such as They were, Thou didst Choose Them, and made Them Every where, the Companions of Thy Life.

One, Amongst Them, was a Publican; One, who was to Deny Thee; Another was to Betray Thee; and to whom Thou hadst Certainly, for All That, Forgiven, After so Execrable a Villany, had He but Desired it of Thee; They were, Almost All, so Loose, and Inconstant, as to Forsake Thee; Such Muckworms, that their Souls were Always Grovelling on the Earth; They had the Light of Heaven before Their Eyes; And Yet they Could not See; They were Fed with the Bread of Life, and did Not Gather Strength.

Like the Best of Fathers Thou didst Treat Them with the Most Dear, and Engaging Conversation; And Yet their Heart was not Touch'd with it. Thou wast their Defence, and Yet They were Afraid of Every Thing; Thou didst Impart Thy Secret Counsels to Them, and they Never Thought of, so much as,

as, Asking the Help of Thy Holy Spirit, to Enlighten them into the Understanding of The Depth of Them. Thou didst Promise Them Everlasting Treasures; And They had no Other Views but the Transitory Riches of this World; Thou didst Inform them In A Doctrine most Pure and Divine, and They Made no Advantage of it; But, What am I a Talking of? O Lord! They Saw Him, with their Own Eyes, whose Life was the Admiration of Angels; Who Enrich'd Heaven; And Fill'd Paradise with Joy; And Yet They Knew Him Not.

II. How, Couldst Thou Endure it, Most Gracious Lord, that They should be, at the Same Time so Near Thee, and Yet so far from Thee! How Couldst Thou Restrain Thy Love so Long, and not Immediately Enflame them with that Celestial Fire! Why didst Thou Stay till Thou wast taken from Their Eyes, and They Could See Thee No More, before Thou didst Heap Thy Gifts upon them, Since Thou Lovedst them so Tenderly! Without Doubt it was On My Account, O Eternal Wisdom that Thou didst Treat them so; For, I am Perswaded, It had been Infinitely more Agreeable to Thee, to have Reign'd Absolutely Within Them, from the First Moment of their Vocation, to have throughly Purified their Souls; to have Perfectly and Entirely Possessed them; And to have Fill'd them with the Treasures of Thy Grace, as Thou didst Afterwards; But Thou didst Think it more Proper to Bear, for some Time, with their Infirmities; That I might Behold, In Them who were to be Masters of The Christian Perfection, The Pillars of The Truth,

Truth, And The *Light of The World*, What I might Expect and Hope for from Thy Goodness; And that all my Miseries Could not Deprive me of That, nor Stop the Course of Thy Mercies.

O Certain Refuge of Thy Distressed Creature! It is not Only *In Thy Father's House, that There are Many Mansions*; But there is A Great Number of 'em also, Within Thy Heart; For there Thou Hast Receiv'd and Lodged All the World! St. *Thomas*, as Entirely Unbelieving as He was, the Thief upon the Cross, the Publican, the Leper, the Notorious Harlot, Found a Place There; And Even the Traytor *Judas* Himself, Had been Received, had He not Voluntarily Abandoned Himself to Despair: In this Tender and Endearing Heart it is, that all the Clouds of Darkness are Dispell'd; All the Imperfections of the Soul Consumed; All Sensual and Earthly Affections are Destroyed; All Inward Convulsions of the Mind Compos'd and Laid at Rest; And the Whole Man Sanctified and Become A New Creature.

How is it Possible, then, that This Heart, which is so Large and Capacious, so, for Ever Open and Expanded, so Charitable and Beneficent, should be shut up Only Against Me, My God! And that Thy Wretched Creature, should not find any Place Therein, where He might see All his Peccant Humours Destroy'd, and His Soul Quickened and Renew'd by the Strength and Energy of Thy Holy Spirit! I Adore Thee Thou God of Love! who art Enflam'd with the Fire of the most Perfect Charity! I Adore Thee, O Light Eternal! Thou Sun, who art Ever in Thy Morning Course, III.

Ever

Ever Rising; But art Never Beyond the Meridian, nor Canst Possibly Set or Pass Into a Declension! Thou Fountain which knows no Ebb, but is for Ever Flowing, and Cannot be Exhausted! Thou Ocean of Blessings Without Number, that hast No Banks nor Bottom! Thou Sweet Refreshment of All Those that Labour In this Earthly Pilgrimage! The Comfort of those that Mourn; The Refuge of the Oppressed; And the Asylum of All Sinners! Accept me, Divine Jesus! into This Thy Compassionate Heart, In which I Presume to Hope that I am Registred by Thine Eternal Love; Where shall all My Weakness and Imperfection be Consumed, Unless It be in this Fire of Thy Love; And if There Be not a Place, *There*, for All the Sinful World to Shelter In; How Canst Thou be Said to be the Saviour and Redeemer of Universal Mankind!

I must Own that My Sins and Infirmities are Much Greater than Those of the Apostles were; For Theirs Proceeded Only from Their Weakness, Their Ignorance and Simplicity; They did not Quite Forsake Thee; They Accompany'd Thee Every Where, at Thy Devotions, In Thy Travels, at thy Table, In thy Fatigues, and In thy Utmost Wants and Necessities: They Still Dwelt with Thee During thy Trials and Temptation, They Express'd their Love for Thee after the Best Manner they Could; And their Imperfections and Frailty Could not Withdraw them from Thee, or Prompt them to Leave Thee: But Mine, O Lord, are the Result of Malice, I Fly, when there is no Body Pursues me: I Banish my Self every Day I Live, from Thy Endearing

Pre-

Presence; I am Always Wavering and Inconstant in thy Service; I do not Want even for any Temptation, or Pretence to Forsake Thee.

With Eagerness Thy Disciples Listen'd to Thy Doctrine; And I Shut my Ears Against the Melody of Thy Voice: They Humbly Submitted to Thy Tender Remonstrance; But I Justify My Self, upon the most Just Rebuke: They Presently Betook Themselves to Thee, whenever they Offended, for a Cure to their Distemper; And I am fill'd with Presumption when I Transgress! Their Sincerity and Plainness, Drew Thy Love upon Them; Whereas My Pride and Haughtiness have Justly Render'd Me the Object of Thy Scorn and Hatred; O Heavenly Physician! Who Seest Into the Bottom and Corruption of My Sores, Couldst Thou ever Endure the Horrid Spectacle of'em, Unless Thou hadst the Tenderness of a Father for Me! Wouldst Thou have the Patience to Wait so Long for Me, unless Thy Paternal Bowels were fill'd with Mercy and Compassion! Wouldst Thou Forbid Me to Despair, If thy Endearing Sweetness were Possible to be Express'd? Wouldst Thou Invite and Call me so, to Such Divine Treasures, were not Thy Liberality and Bounty more Boundless and Unfathomable than 'tis to be Conceived?

Art Thou He, then, O Divine Jesus! Who Seeketh Me? And am I the Creature Thou wouldst have United to Thee! Behold me Here, Before Thee, O My Love, and My Supreme Felicity! What Hinders Thee this Moment from the Execution of thy Will and

and

and Pleasure! Wouldst Thou have Me Remain Such a Creature as I am? Wilt Thou, then, Have Patience and Bear with Me any Longer? Hast Thou taken a Resolution to Give Me up to a Separation from Thee, In the Region of the Shadow of Death? O why Dost Thou not Cast Thine Eyes upon me! Shall I be the Only Wretched Soul, whom Thou Dost throw Out of thy Remembrance? Why dost Thou not Resuscitate and Quicken me, O Thou Life of My Soul! Why dost thou not Heal me, O my Salvation! I will not Leave Thee, 'till Thou hast Entirely Chang'd me Into Thy Self! I will Embrace thy Feet; There will I Remain, Unmoveable and Fixt, and follow Thee whithersoever Thou shalt Betake Thy Self.

IV. What Is it that Thou dost Desire of Me, O Lord! Wouldst Thou have me Repent? Wouldst Thou have Me Become a Better Creature; To Love Thee, to Serve Thee; And that I should not Flagg, But Continue and Persevere In thy Love and Service? I Consent to It, O My God, to the Utmost of My Power: Yes, I Desire to be Wholly and Entirely thine; To Love Thee for Ever, and Never Forsake Thee; I would be every Thing that Thou Desirest of me: Lord! Do thou Support my Will, and Strengthen my Weakness! My Will is Good; But I Neither Know how far my Will Should Go, nor how Long it will Continue! I find my Self this very Moment Call'd Back to the World; By my Own Wretched Miseries, which follow me Everywhere, It seems as if they were Afraid I should Leave them; And my Flesh Prepares it Self, to Give me a Sharp

Encoun-

Encounter. Do thou, Therefore, who, In Thy Goodness, Art my Support, Do Thou Also, In Thy Puissance, Fight This Battle for me! Defend me, O Lord! And Let Thine Eyes Behold, In my Soul, The Fruits of so Ancient and such a Paternal Love! Destroy Thou, by The Consuming Fire of Thy Spirit, whatever In me is Displeasing to Thy Holiness and Purity; And make me just such a One as Thou wouldst have me Be.

I cannot Complain of Thee, O Father of Mercies, I only Can Lament my Own Guilt; For Thou hast Always Lov'd my Soul, as Wretched as it has Been: At The very Time I Fled from Thee, Thou didst Remove The Snares that were Planted for me: Thou didst Stop The Career of Death; Left It should Surprise me, before I Return'd to Thee! Thou didst whisper to me that which was most for my Advantage; Thou didst make use of A Thousand Ways to Call me Back; Thou didst often Embarrass me with Cross-Providences, and throw Afflictions In my way, that Being Taken up with Them, I might have the Less Time and Opportunity to Commit Iniquity, and Offend Thee; Thou didst Suffer me to be Tempted that I might See The Danger I was in; And Sometimes, didst Permit that I should be overcome, Thereby to Convince me of my Frailty; Thou didst Reduce me to the most Dangerous and Pressing Extremities, that I might be Sensible, How much I stand In need of Thy Succour and Assistance; And, Although I have most Grievously Sinned Against Thee, my God, I had Still Gone on, and Run Into Greater Guilt, Had not Thine All-Bounteous Providence, V.

dence, taken from me The Opportunities of Transgression.

Thou hast never Entirely Withdrawn Thine Hand from me; I have, Always Experienc'd thy Succour; And Thou hast Turned All Things to my Good, Even my Very Sins Themselves, In Permitting my Presumption to be Humbled: If I Return'd to Thee, Thou didst Bear with my Lukewarmness and Indifferency; Thou didst Accept The Weak and Feeble Inclinations of so Deficient a Vertue; Thou Didst Excite me to Know my Resolutions of Serving Thee; And didst Give me A Clear Insight Into mine Infirmities, That I could not Put them Effectually In Execution without The Assistance of Thy Grace.

VI. I should Never Make an End, should I Relate All The Particulars of Thy Mercies: For, How many Blessings hast Thou Bestow'd upon me! How many Sins hast Thou Forgiven me! Thou hast, Always, had The Bowels of A Compassionate Father for me; Thou hast not Turn'd Away Thy Face; Notwithstanding All The Falshood and Perfidiousness of my Ungrateful Heart, which Offer'd Fair, and Promised The All Things, But Performed Nothing. Thou didst Listen to my Desires, Altho' Thou didst Fore-See Nothing would Proceed from Them, but Barrenness and Inconstancy! I Run In Debt Again Immediately; Thou didst See my Relapse; And didst Bear with me; Thou didst Tenderly Raise me up; and Restor'd me to Thy Friendship, which I was Again to Violate and Loosely to Betray Soon after; Did Ever Any One Behold so

Dear

Dear A Father, A more Tender Mother, or A Friend more Faithful.

What Return of Thanks ſhall I Render Unto Thee, O Divine Jeſus! I Owe Thee Infinitely More Than thy Diſciples did! They Only Exercis'd thy Patience for Three Years; But I have Tempted and Wearied it Out All my Life-time! They Spent The Greateſt Part of Their Days In thy Love and Service; But Mine are Paſſing Away Intirely In A Supine Lukewarmneſs, and In Sin.

I am More Indebted to thy Mercy Than All the Reſt of Mankind; For, There are A World of Poor Souls whom haſt Given up to Deluſion, whilſt Thou haſt Kept me In the Faith! Thou haſt Let Them Go Aſtray After Their Own Inventions To Worſhip Idols, And to *Follow After Vanity*; Whilſt Thou doſt Enlighten Me, with The Brighteſt Rayes of Thy Truth! Thou Letteſt Others Alone, to Wander on, Even to *The Very Gates of Death*, In Their Extravagancies, Whilſt Thou Giveſt me A Sight of my Errors; And Vouchſafeſt me The Grace to Turn Away from Them, or, at Leaſt, to Offer up my Prayers and Supplications to Thee, for Strength to do it; In A word, Thou wouldſt not forgive me, So Many Sins as I my Self Commit, If Thy Goodneſs deſigned not to Prevent me Againſt the Saggeſtians of my Own Depraved Inclinations.

I Adore Thee, O my Redeemer! And I Humbly Thank thee, to the Utmoſt of My Power, for All Theſe Favours, And All That Infinite Number of Others, Which I Cannot Recollect: Let All The Saints, And, All The Angels of Heaven, joyn, Together, with Me,

To Bless and Praise Thy Holy Name! And Eternally to Sing the Hosannah's of thy Mercy!

VII. Thou, O Lord, who Knowest, that, THAT, which Hinders Me from Improving All These Graces, is, That I have not Recourse to Thee In My Wants; And that I Love Some Things Out of Thee, which I do not Affect for Thy Sake: O Purifie My Heart from these Uuworthy Engagements, And Let Me have no Other Master, No Other Guide, No Other Iudge, Nor, No Other Friend Besides Thee! For tho', It may Seem, that Nothing but what is Great and Glorious can be Agreeable to Thine Infinite Majesty; Yet, for all that, I Know that Thou art Pleased with A Pure and Uncompound Honesty, and Sincerity; And That Thou dost not Look upon't as Unworthy of Thee, to Enter Into the Particulars of Our Wants; or To Count All Our Steps and Motions: If Thou Canst Number The Hairs of Our Head, and The Leaves of the Trees; Dost Thou not Know also, whatever Belongs to us; Our Breath, Our Thoughts, Our Inclinations, And All The Moments of Our Life.

Hadst Thou Appointed only, One Hour, In The Year, to Vouchsafe me Audience, to have Provided for My Necessities, And to Promulge Thy Blessed Will Unto me; Ought I not to Have Long'd for This Blessed Hour, All The Other Part of The Whole Year? And to Have Prepar'd and Qualify'd my Self, to Converse with Thee! To Listen to what Thou Wouldst Please to Say, And to Receive Thy Blessings, which, for The Year to Come, would be The Food of My Soul; In Expecting The

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Return of This Hour, So Very Happy and Desirable? Why, Therefore, don't I Converse with Thee Every Moment, as with A wise and Faithful Friend, And A Powerful Protector, whom Neither The Government of The Whole Universe, Nor The Weight of All Eternity Can Prevent, or Hinder Him from Thinking on Me!

Why do I not Come And Open My Heart Unto Thee In The Midst of my Afflictions; Why don't I Tell Thee of My Grievance, In The Language which will Express That Offends Me, The Thoughts which Vex Me, And All The Crosses that Befals Me? Wh ydo I not Make it my Business to Offer up All My Actions to Thee, Since Thou Dost Deign Favourably and Kindly to Accept *That Little* That I do for Thee! Were I but Faithful to Do This, Thou wouldst Heap Thy Riches upon Me; For, If upon the Cold and Languid Prayers that I Make, And My Faint Breathings After Thee, Thou Dost Indulge Me with Thy Blessings, A Thousand Times more, Than, of My Self, I can Possibly Deserve; what Would My Happiness Be, Were I to Offer All; And If It was Wholly Thine, and Entirely Devoted To Thee!

There is One Thing Wanting to Me, O My God, which, Alone, Would Re-establish Me; And without Which, I Cannot So Much as Perceive Those Evils which Encompass Me On Every Side: And That is, HUMILITY, which Is The *Fountain*, and *Original* of *All Other Blessings*. Thou Knowest, My Dearest Redeemer, who Art The most Humble of All VIII.

Mankind, That I Cannot Obtain This Grace, But only By The Diſtruſt of My Self; The Fear of Thy Diſpleaſure, And The Happineſs of Sighing, without Reſpite, After Thee! 'Tis This Alone Can Teach Me, of How Great Moment and Importance 'Tis Unto Me to Know Thee; And I Know How Agreeable This is to Thy Nature: Lay me Then, As Low, as Thou Shalt Think it Meet, O Humble Jeſus! Engrave In Me This Vertue, which is ſo Dear unto Thee! And which is The Guardian and Harbinger of All The Reſt, That I may be Apprehenſive and Fearful of My Self; That I may Seek Thee with *my Whole Heart*, That I may Entirely Submit and Reſign my Self to Thy Conduct, And That, Being Looſed from My Self, I may Live on No Other Account But unto Thee, O Divine Jeſus! My Lord, My Support, My Comforter, My Salvation, My Love, My Supreme Happineſs, And My True Life!

☞ O Moſt Humble Servant, and Moſt Worthy Mother of God! Who Never Haſt Been Separated From Him; Since He is not Only Content to be My Refuge; But Would Alſo have You to be my Intercesſor; Do not Refuſe Me Your Protection; Altho You Are Exempt from My Miſeries; You Are The Daughter of *Adam*; Have Pitty On your *Own Fleſh*, And Help me To A Meaſure of That Divine and Heavenly Spirit Which Animated and Enlivened All your Actions.

And you, O Glorious Company of Apoſtles! Who have Been *The Light of The World*; Procure to Me Thoſe Graces of Converſion, Which You Carried

And

And Dispensed, Thro' The Universe; Pitty My Infirmities; To Which You Your Selves have *One Time*, Been Subject; And O Let me Intreat you, to Interceed for This Poor Sinner, That Christ would Please to Vouchsafe Me A Portion of That Holy Spirit, Which Made you Perfect!

THE Eighteenth Instance OF THE SUFFERINGS OF Our Blessed Saviour:

CHAP. XVIII.

In His Travels.

I. THE Divine Shepherd Began, with This *Little Flock*, to Over-Run All *Palestin*; And to Recollect *The Lost Sheep of The House of Israel*: His Care, Afterwards, Extended A Great Deal Farther; And, That He Might fill up the Vacancies of Those who, by Their Blind-

Biindness, and the Hardness of Their Heart, where to Reject his Word, He Prepar'd Himself, at that Time, to Draw All the Nations of The Universe unto Him: But, that The Jews Might Have no Occasion to Complain, He forgot Nothing, On His Side, for Their Conversion; He Preach'd, to Them, *The Kingdom Of Heaven*, The Law of Grace, And The Divine Treasures, He Brought to Them.

Although He was The *True Messias* whom Almighty God had Promis'd Them, So Long; whom Their Forefathers Had So Much Desired, And They Themselves Ought to Have Sought for, Since He Came particularly UNTO THEM; He made it His Business to Seek Them first, In The Profound Oblivion and Supiness They Lived In, About their Salvation; He *Called*, and *Invited* Them; He Offer'd Them His Grace; And Spar'd Neither Care Nor Pains to Enlighten Them, To Tear Them from Their Vices, And to Load Them with His Blessings.

Having, Then, Left His most Holy Mother, Under whose Obedience He had Liv'd, So Happily, for So many Years, He Went to Capernaum: This was A Town of Galilea Situate On The Borders of The Tribe of Zabulon and Nepthali, very Near to The Jordan, On The Side of A Salt Lake, Call'd The Sea of Galilee: These Two Tribes Being Apostatis'd, In the Most Degenerate Manner, where Ruined with the Rest of The Kingdom of *Israel*, Meaning The Ten *Rebellious* Tribes. Whose Chief Capital Citty was That Of Samaria. But It Was So Loaded with Iniquity, That It Drew

Down the Vengeance of God upon it; And was Tolally Destroy'd by Pestilence and The Sword.

II. It was at Capernaum, Therefore, that The Blessed Jesus Began to Preach *The Glad Tidings* of His Gospel, According To the Prediction of The Prophet * *The Land of Zebulon, and The Land of Nepthali were First Visited: The People that Walked In Darkness Have Seen A Great Light; They that Dwell In the Land of The shadow of Death, upon Them Hath The Light Shined.* *There* It was that He Spread His Doctrin In Such A Plentiful Shower; *There*, that He Confirmed what He Promulg'd with Such a Numberless Succession of Miracles; And Bless'd this Place so often with his Presence, that he Commonly Called it, His Town: For, as we do not say, that The Sun, in his Celestial Course, Rises to Give Light to itself; But to Beam its Radiance upon the Earth; Subject to the Darkness of the Night, and to the Change of Seasons; So, The Glorious *Jesus*, The *Sun of the Celestial City*, which is not capable of Darkness, nor *The Shadow of Change*, Rose, *not* for his own Sake, but to *Enlighten* Sinners, whose Days are Short; whose Lights are Gloomy and Overcast; And whose Nights are so Long and Tedious, and Over-Clouded, That the Region They Live In, May seem to be uninhabitable.

Isa. 9. 1, 2.

He only Call'd *Capernaum*, *His Town*, Because He Found the Means, There, Either to put his Zeal In Practice, or to Perform The Wonderful Works of His Power There in: And it is a most Comfortable Consideration to us, That Our Blessed Saviour, who is The Eternal Light Vouchsafes, In His *Goodwill*, to

to Rise upon Sinners; To Visit *These Frozen and Obscure Regions*; To Warm them by his cheering Beams, And thereby Render them Capable of Producing Those Fruits, UNTO LIFE, that he Expects from Them.

III. This Divine Sun, then, having Appeared in a Part of The Earth, that was Covered with the Clouds of Sin, Ran thro' All the Desolate Towns of *Israel*, the Number of which by *Joshua*'s Division, amounted to Three Hundred, without taking In, Either Those which were Built since his Time, Or Castles, or other Little Places: The Single Tribe of *Judah*, Contain'd An Hundred and Fifteen Towns; The Holy *Jesus* Entered into Their Synagogues to Preach, to them, *The Kingdom of God*; He went Into The Gardens, and upon the Mountains, to Pass the Nights There In Prayer; And Into The Houses to Heal The Sick, and to Inform Every Creature: In Publick, He wrought Miracles; In the Fields and by The The River-Sides He Gather'd The People Together, to Preach Penance to them; Sometime He Fed Them by a Miracle, some amazing Instance of Provision for them; He Raised The Dead to Life, He Rejected no One; He Drew Sinners to him by the Sweet Odour and Fragrancy of His Divine Vertues; He fill'd Them with Wonder and Joy, by the Attractive Power of his most Sublime Doctrine, and The Engaging Sweetness of His Behaviour.

He Visited Every Place, also, On Each Shore of the Sea, After He had sent His Disciples to Publish His Arrival; And tho' The Places were Large Enough to Employ Seventy Two Disci-

Disciples, to which He Sent Them; He Visited Them, All, Himself, One after Another; He Spent as much Time, as was Necessary Among Them, And when He went away, He left His Holy Spirit there, Behind Him, to Impregnate The *Divine Seed* that He Had Sown, and Grow up Into *Good Fruit unto Salvation.*

IV. Such Were The Cares, The Fervency, The Labours and Continual Journeying of The Blessed *Jesus:* He Travelled on Foot, In a Rough and Uneven Country; Among Stones and Craggy Rocks, Up the Mountains and Down the Dales and Valleys; Labouring Under the Extremities of Heat and Cold, the Inclement Winds and Tempestuous Storms and Rain; and oftentimes He found Himself so faint and tired, that he was forc'd to stop Himself, by the Way, to take a Little Rest.

As soon as ever He Came to his Journey's End, He began to Instruct the People; and to do The *Wonderful Works* of *His Power and Goodness,* Whilst his Disciples Were Wracking their Brains About His Temporal Necessities; He was Wholly Taken up, In forwarding The *Salvation of Souls:* In some Places, He was well Received; But very ungratefully in Others: In Some Parts He was even driven from Among them; And then he Retir'd without any Murmuring, or Complaint: Ever, as Patient of Injuries and Wrong, as he was Liberal In Those Showers of Divine Blessings, which He so Plentifully dispens'd to those whom He found in a Diposition to Receive them.

His Disciples, being Inrag'd one Day, and Desirous that He would Call for *Fire from Heaven to Consume This Ungrateful People,* He told Them

Them, with His usual Mildness, * *Ye Know not what Spirit Ye are of*; Signifying thereby that His Spirit was The *Spirit of Peace*; of Softness, of Patience, of Long-Suffering, who waiteth for The Return of A Sinner; And Gently offers Him his Grace, without any Force or Violence. When, upon another occasion, They would have Dissuaded Him from Going to *Judea*, where they had Attempted to Stone Him some Time before; He Answered Them, That *There were Twelve Hours In the Day*, Giving them to Understand that Those of The *Apostolick Order*, Are Well Employ'd, if they Wait Eleven Hours, and Expect, with Patience, the Conversion of Those they are Commission'd to, if They do but Accept Grace In the Twelfth Although they have Rejected it All the while Before.

* St. Luke 9. 35.

It is Thus the Blessed Jesus Behaves himself still with Mankind, Even at this very Day; He Invites Them by his Blessings, and his Grace; And, when They Refuse It, He Leaves Them with Concern and Sorrow; But, Instead of Rejecting Them, with that just Indignation which Their Ungrateful Obstinacy deserves; He Returns Again, some Other Time, and Knocks at The Gate; And if He finds Any Disposition There, Ready to Receive Him, He forgets All former Affronts that we have Offered Him; and Treats us as if we had prevented Him, Sought Him, and joyfully Received Him, whenever he Vouchsafes His Presence to us.

V. 'Tis Impossible to Express how many Blessings Our Blessed Saviour dispens'd among The *Jews*, In Every Place He Pass'd thro'; For Although, The Holy Evangelists have Transmitted

mitted A Great Many of His Miracles to Futurity; St. *John* Assures us, that, if He were Particularly to Recount Them, *The Whole World would not Contain* the Volumes; And yet, All This was done, Not In Many Ages, But In *Three Years*; Not by Any other Instruments, but By Himself; It was, doubtless, His Pleasure to shew us, by the Little Time He Took, to Perform Such *Mighty Works*, That A Short Life, full of Good Works, is Infinitely of More Worth and Advantage, than One of Many Years, that have been Idly Spent, or of No Use or Service; And, That There Needs not Much Time, to Make One's Self Master of the Good Fruits of Vertuous and Meritorious Acquists.

Were God but to See in us Our Days Accomplish'd, and Our Life Entirely taken up In His Service, He would Probably Shorten the Time of our Present Banishment from a Better World; So that, Being Enrich'd With His Graces, In a Few Years, We should be, the Sooner, *Translated* Into *His Kingdom*; But, Because The Greatest Part, of Our Life, is Spun Out in Sin, We Want Some Time for PENNANCE, to Wash it Away with Our Tears, thereby to Expiate Our Guilt and Merit Heaven: And This Bounteous God does Not Often Prolong Our Temporal Exile, But only In Expectation of our Conversion and Return to Him: *The Just Man, when He's Dead, says The Holy Scripture, Condemns The Wicked Sinners; And Youth finished In a short Time, Condemns the Protracted Lefe of The Unjust:* For The Righteous Man, In Those few Years he Lives upon the Earth, Acquires Spiritual Qualifications

Wisd. 4. 16.

lifications Sufficient for his Own Soul, and to Communicate and Impart of His Divine Graces unto Others; And, when The Early Part of Life is Well Employ'd, It is of the Same Esteem, In The Sight of God, as Reverend Old-Age full of Merits: But The Long Life of The Sinner, who Squanders away so many Years, without Any Thought or Regard for his Salvation, is full of Wickedness, and Altogether Useless and Unrpofitable.

This made a Heathen Phisosopher say, *That The Wicked don't Die:* For, 'tis a Sort of Paradox, to Suppose that Person should Die, who never could be said, properly, to have Lived; Or that He should finish A Life that He has never yet Begun; But, with more Propriety One Might Assert, That *The Sinful Man is always a Dying*, Because He does not Understand what it is to Live: For as we can't Properly, Call That, *Life*, which is deprived of All Those Blessings which are the Very Essence of Eternal Joy and Felicity; So He who only Lives that He may DIE ETERNALLY, Begins to Die, Before He has A Quickening of True Life within Him, Since he is Never In the Way that Leads Unto it: And Thus it is that Those, Who *Number Many Years* without Doing those Christian Works which only Follow Them that *Sleep In Christ*, are Like unto a Ship that's Beaten To and Fro In A Storm, which is Toss'd About In Mighty Agitations, but makes Little Way, or Progress. * *Seneca.*

The Religious Man, who is Entirely taken up about The Important Business of his Salvation, and the Service of God, finds, In A Few Years, Much

Much Time and Opportunity for his Devotions, for Fasting, for Doing Pennance, for helping his Neighbour by his Advice, his Example and his Charity; for Enduring The Cross, and Bearing those Afflictions Patiently and with Resignation, which Come Not *Out of the Dust*; And for The Practice of All other Christian Vertues: For, He Loses No Opportunity, but makes Use of Every Moment, that falls in his Way; And there is No Time but what furnishes him with An Opportunity of some Meritorious Improvement; whereas He, that Neglects the Care of his Salvation, and Carries his Thoughts no farther than how to Gratifie his Unruly Appetites, and Sensual Desires, Craves All the Time, that is Allotted him, for the Enjoyment of his Pleasures, his Sports, his Diversion, his Intrigues, his Ambition, and the Vanity of his Soul; to Comply with A Thousand false Decorums which the World Exacts; And which Almighty God does not Require: He Wants as Many Lives, as there are different Amusements, Among which He is obliged to Share, and Parcel out this short Epitome of Life, the Only Time, Dubious and Uncertain as it is, which God has Given him to Work out his Eternal Salvation in.

From hence it Comes, That if he has any Inclination to Bethink himself, and to Cnocert Matters about his Soul's Health, he Can find no Time for't; Because the Avocations of The World, Engross the Greatest Part of it; And It is not till he comes to Die, that He Begins to see what was his Duty, In Order to Live Well; But, as Those Things which are done in Haste, are scarce Ever Ready, for the Moment when there

there is most Need of them; He who puts it Off to this Last Hour, to do the Great Work of his Salvation in, How Can such a One, In such an Article of Time, When he is Oppress'd with Pains and Sorrows; Under the Terrors and Apprehensions of God's Judgments, Distracted with a Thousand Different Thoughts, Prepare This *Wedding Garment*, without which No One shall ever be Admitted to *That Heavenly Feast?* And If He fails In that which He Ought to do, at *This last Moment*, upon which his Eternal State depends, O What Perdition! What Unhappiness! What Irreparable Loss, and Despair must follow after!

VII. The Blessed Jesus, In the Three Last Years of his Pilgrimage, found Time Enough to make his Circular Visitation thro' all those Towns In and About *Palestine*, to Give Health to the Sick, and Life to the Dead; To Make many Tedious and Weary Journeys; To Undergo Many A Toil, and Painful Labour, and Endure much Sorrow; To Die, and Rise again from The Dead; and to Ascend Into Heaven; For, He Devoted All his Thoughts to the *Great Work* of Our Salvation, for which His *Eternal Father* sent Him: Therefore, After such Great Fatigues, his Sweetest Comfort was to have it In his Power to do Good to Mankind; And He went not Into any Place where he did not Leave some Token of his Zeal for Our Salvation.

He was sat one Day to Rest himself, by a Well-side, Near the Town of *Samaria*: It is Easy to Imagin, by that which Pass'd There, with what his Mind was taken up; and what it was that Could Sweeten his Laborious Adventures:

ventures: For whilst his Disciples were Gone to seek some Provision, Having desir'd a Little Water to Quench his Thirst of a Woman, that was a *Samaritan*, who was Come thither to Draw some, And she having Refus'd to Give him Any, for a Wicked Reason, that is, Because of the Aversion, the *Samaritans* bore to The *Jews*; Our Blessed Saviour, Who Eagerly desir'd the Salvation of This Poor Creature, that He might not Let slip so favourable an Opportunity, spake to her Immediately About Those Divine, Those *Living Waters*, which, from The Heart of The Just, * *Spring up Even to Eternal Life.*

* St. John 4. 14.

When he had Implanted In her A Desire after so Salubrious a Water; That He might Remove, at first, All Obstacles that might prevent so Great a Good, with an Engaging Sweetness, and Wonderful Wisdom, He Represented to Her The Dangerous Condition She was in: And, Because, The Knowledge of *The Mediator*, And A *Lively Faith*, In Him, were Absolntely Necessary, In Order to The Conversion of This Sinner, He Discover'd *That* to Her, which He had Never Opened or Revealed so Plainly, Either to The People In Publick, or to His Disciples In Particular, *viz. That He was The* MESSIAS *whom God had Promised Them*; And, That He was not, Less, Come to save Her, than All The Rest of Mankind; Thus, Being Enlightened, and Converted, In so Short A Time, She Proclaimed, Every where, *The Wonders of the Divine Grace.*

The Disciples Return'd, presently After, And Desired The Holy Jesus, That He would be

be Pleased to Refresh Himself with the Viands They had Brought; But He Replied, *That He was fed with a Meat which They Knew Nothing of*, The fulfilling of His Eternal Father's Will, In The Saving of Souls.

When He had Said This, The Citizens of *Samaria* Came and Carried Him with Them; Heard Him; And Acknowledged Him to be *The True Messias*; Behold what was His Food That Day! 'Twas *This* Alone that could Satisfie or Content Him, And was Always, unto Him, most Delicious and Grateful.

The *Divine Goodness*, therefore, having Resolved to Deliver us from the Superfluous Cares of this Life, Commanded That our first Design should be to * *Seek The Kingdom of God And His Righteousness:* For when we make The Things of This World our chief Concern, It Always Happens, Either that They will not Prosper; Or That They are very Tedious; Or That The Enjoyment, we Expect from Them, does not Countervail, or Ballance The Trouble, and Expence They Cost us; or That They are Cross'd with A Thousand Disappointments, Or, In short, that They are full of Whimsical Projects which waste Our precious Time, and spend the Term of Life to no Purpose: He, Alone, has A Taste of True Peace, who seeks The Kingdom of God before All Other Things; Because He meets with Nothing, but what he draws Some Profit and Advantage from; For, In the Loss of these Perishing and Vain Enjoyments, He Enriches himself by His Patience; He Comforts Himself with the Blessings he Receives from the Hands of God, VIII.

* St. Mat. 6. 33.

 And

And, Even In the Affluence of This World, he finds Out An Occasion, with The Mammon of Unrighteousness, to Provide A *Fund* In *Those Heavenly Habitations.*

IX. When The Joys of A Better World are Rivetted In the Soul, A Small Matter Contents it, In This Earthly Pilgrimage: But so long as it Continues Senseless and Unconcerned About those Inestimable Treasures; All The Riches In the World are not sufficient: The Unhappy Miser, In the Gospel, Amidst All the Heaps and Magazines of Wealth, He had In Store, Never could have Enough to Content him; He Refused A few Crumbs of Bread to Poor *Lazarus*; And when, from The Deep of Hell, Into which he was fallen, He Lifted up his Eyes, and saw *Lazarus* In *Abraham*'s Bosom, He, then, Asked no more than for *A Drop of Water to Cool His Tongue!* Since The *Blessed Jesus* was pleas'd to Appease his Hunger; To Rest from his Labours; to Seek for Our Welfare, and Salvation; To Heal us of our Sores, And to Enrich our Poverty; is it not Just and Reasonable that our Food and Nourishment should be to Love, to Serve, and to Please Him!

A

Divine Contemplation,

Upon The Wearying and Fatigues of Our Blessed Saviour, In His Travels Upon Our Account.

O *Power Divine!* Who art The *Strength of The Weak*; And *The Refuge of Sinful Souls! O My God! My Lord!* And *All my Hope!* What will Become of me, shouldst Thou not Cast the Eyes of Thy Mercy upon My Soul! Long Ago Would'st Thou have Abandon'd me, And I had been Lost, Had'st Thou look'd upon my Transgressions, to Punish me According to the Guilt of Them, And not forgive Them: How often had I Offended Thee! And where should I be, at this Moment, had'st Thou Given me up to follow The Dictates of my Own Will! It is of Thy Mercy that I am yet Alive! And that I am not sunk Into The *Abyss* of *All Misery and Confusion*; It is Because Thou hast Supported me with Thy Hand; Because Thy Merits have Out-Ballanced my Trespasses; That Thou hast not Sentenced me to *Reprobation*; That thou hast Always Made me Hope, In thy Mercy, for Forgiveness; And still Invitest me to the Participation of Thy Blessings. I.

Can it be Possible, O Divine Saviour, That Thou shouldst Suffer Such A Miserable Creature to be Near Thee! Can So Great Corruption Remain with So much Purity! And How shall my Vileness Presume So much as to Lift up Its Eyes Towards thy Majesty! What Connexion Can There be Between My Poverty and Thy Riches! Between A Soul all Over Leprous and Covered with Sores, and Him who is the Very Essence of all Felicity; Between Such Clouds of Thick and Outer Darkness, and Such, Pure, *Transcendent Light and Brightness!* Thou Beholdst Me, O Lord, just as, In Truth, I am, That is, More Miserable Even than I can Conceive; But, Thou art So Great, So Mighty, So High, that Thou Canst not Be Comprehended But By thy Self; and Thy Greatness Condescends to Help and Succour This *Dust and Ashes.*

II. O God of My Heart! Who wilt not Abandon me, Because thou hast Created me for thy Enjoyment; But, who Wilt Vouchsafe, On the Contrary, Thy Self, to Lighten my Darkness, Heal my Wounds, Instruct my Ignorance, and Enrich my Poverty; Thou Knoweſt what I am Without Thee! And Thou Only Canst Tell how It is Possible that Amidst So many Miseries I should Become Thy Temple! Upon This Account It is, That Thou wouldest Divorce me from my Self, and Ingraft me Into Thee: But if This be So Great an Advantage unto me, and Thou, my God, art So desirous of it, who shall keep me, So much as for A Moment, at A Distance from Thee!

I, who, on Account of The Continual Wants I have of Thy Succour and Assistance, Ought to

to Call upon Thee, Every Hour of The Day, and Every Moment of The Night, I am Dumb, and It is God that Calleth me! I, Whose Intreſt, it is So much, to Knock, Inceſſantly, at Thy Door, I Remain Indifferent, and Un-concern'd, And It is my God that Importunes me! I, who Ought to be, Always, Watchful of The Leaſt Token of Thy Pleaſure, I am Deaf to The moſt Strict and Poſitive of Thy Commands! And It is my God that muſt Sollicite me, to Bring me to my Duty.

Is This to be Imagined, O my Lord, That The Guilty Should Refuſe to be Forgiven; and The Injur'd, Offended God Should make All The Advances! That the Dependent Creature Should Flee Its Happineſs, and The Great Creator Should Seek Him? That The Sin-Sick Soul ſhould not Value his Own Health, and That Only The Phyſician ſhould Deſire it? That he That is Smitten ſhould Love his Wounds; and that Thou, O my God, ſhouldſt Undergo The pain for Him! Behold, how far my Miſery is Extended; O my God! and How far Beyond, thy Mercy Reaches.

III. O That I were but as Senſible of my Own Unhappineſs, as Thou art! That I did But Abhor mine Iniquities as Thou hateſt Them! That I did But Long as much to forſake Them, as Thou art Earneſt to Deliver me from Their Slavery! That I would But do So much for my Self as Thou art Diſpos'd to do for An Ungrateful Servant; Then ſhould I not Be So Wretched as I am.

Thou, Moſt Divine Jeſus, who Knoweſt the Greatneſs of my Sins, The Miſchief That They Bring upon me, and The Bliſs They

Deprive me of; who hast Seen, Long Before I had any Being, how Insensible I should be Of my Own Destruction; Who wert Sensibly Touch'd, for my Sake, upon This Account; and who hast Undergone So much that I might Be Healed: Thou hast, In thy Providence, Been Careful to Prevent me and to Search me Out; Thou hast Discover'd Thy Self, O Light Divine! *To Those who Sat In The Shadow of Death:* Thou hast Run after Thy Lost Sheep, O Living and Charitable Shepherd! Among The Rocks, upon The Mountains, In The Dales, The Borough's, and Villages; Wearying Thine Innocent Body, with A Thousand fatigues, which Thou hadst No Occasion to Press forward, Since, without any Opposition or Resistance, It followed The Propensity of Thy Blessed will. Thou hadst Excited Every Heart, By the Ravishing Endearments Of Thy Charity, and won Them Into thy Love, to Seek thee, and to Receive Thee: Thou didst Inform Them Plentifully In thy Heavenly Doctrine; with The Admiration of Thy Works, and The Charming Sweetness Of thy Grace.

How many Blessings dost Thou Bestow upon Those that are Offending Thee, Amidst So many Vexations Sorrows Thou art Labouring under, for Their Sakes! And what Grateful Acknowledgements Ought to Swell my Heart, for So many Fatigues, and Such Painful Travail upon my Account!

IV. When any One Invited Thee, Thou didst go to Visit him, Thou didst Connive at The Scantiness and Deficiency of his Faith; Thou, hadst the Generosity to Supply what was Wanting

ing with Inestimable Treasures of Reward; thou didst Recompence the Little Services he paid to Thee; Thou didst make it Thy Business Even to find Out Those who Gave Thee No Invitation, Because Thou didst Feel The Want They had of Thee.

Thou didst Travel to The Sea-Shore, to Call poor Fishermen Into thy Commission: Thou didst Go to meet A Sorrowful Widow, to Bring her Son to Life, who Lay A Lifeless Corps In the Town of *Naim:* Thou Cameſt to the Pleasing Pool, That Thou might'ſt have Opportunity to Cure an Helpless Paralitick, whom No Body Regarded, But Left Destitute to perish! Thou didst Make A Journy to *Tyre*, and *Sidon*, to meet The *Cannanitish* Woman There; Thou didst Enter Into A Pharisees House, to Sanctifie A Sinful Woman under That Roof; And Into *Peter's*, to Relieve and Cure his Father's-Wife; Thou Tookeſt the Way, In which Thou Kneweſt *Zaccheus* was to Come, and, Thou didst Shed A Thousand Blessings upon his Person and his Family; with Great Pains and Wearinesſ Thou Soughteſt the *Samaritan* Woman, to Make her Taſt the Sweetnesſ Of thy Grace: Thou didst Accompany with Sinners, and didst Eat with Them, That, thereby, thou Might'ſt Insinuate, Thy *Heavenly Truths*, Into them: Thou Wenteſt out to meet The Blind, to Give Them Sight; The Possest, to Deliver Them; The Lepers to Cleanse them; The Afflicted to Comfort them; Those that were Gone Astray, to Bring them Back Into the Right way; and the Obstinate and Harden'd to Mollifie and Soften

ten their Obdurate Hearts; And In Every Article Of thy Painful Life, Thou waſt Doing Good.

When Thou waſt Weary, and Under a Conſtraint to Stoop and Reſt thine Over-Burden'd Limbs, In any Place; When the Surly Winds, and the Falls of Rain, Made the Roads Slabby and Difficult to paſs, The Miſerable Condition of So many Straggling Sheep, and the Danger they were In, Would not Let Thee Stop to Take the Reſt, Thou Thyſelf waſt In So Much Need of; The Days Seem'd too ſhort to Thee, and the Nights too Long, and Thou Never Couldſt find Time Enough to Satiſfie The Zeal and Fervency Of thy Soul, which Flam'd So Continually Towards us, and with which it was Devoured.

Although the People follow'd Thee, In Multitudes, thro' The Fields and upon The Mountaines, to Hear Thy Doctrine; And were Supply'd, by Thee, with Food, Both for the Body and the Soul; This Could not Satiſfie thy Charity; But thou muſt Needs Betake Thy Self, and Go Still On, to Every Place, to find Out thoſe, whom the Negligence of their Own Salvation, Or the Cares of this World Hindred from Following Thee! Thou Couldſt not Bear, that any One Should Long for thee *In vain*; But Offeredſt thy Self to Every Soul that Sought Thee; And Invited Even Thoſe who Sought thee not.

V. Open thou The Eyes of My Soul, O Divine Shepherd! To make me See that I am, In Truth, that Loſt Sheep, whom Thou haſt Sought with So much Perſeverance, and with Such Great Fatigue; For that Divine Voice Called

Called me then: The ſame Divine Doctrine Inſtructed me! The Hope thou Gaveſt Sinners did Support me; Thy Miracles made me whole; Thy Labours Gave me Eaſe; And thoſe Eyes which Converted Hearts, In Compaſſion, Regarded and Look'd upon me! Thy Sacred Body was There; But Thy Holy Spirit was within me; Thou There didſt ſhed Thy Bleſſings upon Mankind. But Thou didſt Invite and Call me that I might have my Share and Partake in them: What ſhall I return to Thee, O Lord, for So many Favours.

O Divine Jeſus! ſince thou haſt Search'd me Out with Such Great Pains, Grant that They may not be, In Vain, Beſtow'd upon me; I am not In a Leſs Wretched Condition than Thoſe, Amonſt whom Thou Livedſt; And thou art as much My Saviour, as Thou art Theirs: Vouchſafe me, then, A Place, at the Table of Mathew the Publican; Let me Enter with Thee, Into *Zacchew*'s Houſe; Permit me to Embrace thy Feet; and that I may Be-dew them with my Tears In the Same manner the Repenting *Magdalen* did Once before me; Let me with the Canaanitiſh Woman, ask Thee for Some Small Pittance, ſome few Crumbs of that thy *Bread of Life*; And, with the Samaritan, a Little of That Water, which Purified and Cleans'd her In a Moment.

But If I am Unworthy of All Theſe Favours, at Leaſt Vouchſafe Thine Ear to me O Charitable Shepherd! and Hear the Voice of this Ailing Sheep which Bleats after Thee. Speak Thou, only, a Word, and it ſhall be Cured: Thou doſt Aſſure us, Lord, that, tho' thou haſt been Sent, In the firſt Place,

to

to *The Lost Sheep of the House of Israel*; Yet Nevertheless, Thou hast still *Other Sheep which Toou must Draw Unto Thee*, from the *East*, and from the *West*, that They May Not Perish: I am One of These: Thou Knowest the Misery of my Condition; Thou Seest my Wounds; And the Deplorable, Piteous State to which That INFERNAL *Wolf* has Reduc'd me, when I Erred and Run Astray from Thee: O Bring me Back Into Thy Sheepfold; Grant that I may hear thy Voice, that I may always follow Thee; And that I may never Deviate from those GREEN PASTURES Into Which Thou wilt Conduct me.

VI. O Heavenly Father! Who dost Behold me, and whom My Mortal Eyes Cannot possibly Look Into; Empower me for thy Vision; that I may *See Thee as I am Seen*; And that I may Know My Self, as thou Knowest me! Thou seest my Inward Wants and Poverty: how far I am Distant from Thee; And upon that Account it is, Thou Searchest after me with So much Care and Labour: Thou Seest, O thou Eternal Brightness, Thou Sun of Glory, how Blind I am, In the Knowledg of Thy Perfections! And for this it is, that Thou Dost Rise upon Me; And that Thou Comest to Enlighten *This Region of Darkness*: O That Thou wouldst Descend Into the Deep of my Inward Miseries; which I cannot Sufficiently either Know, or Confess them: Thou Seest Them, O Lord, Thou Suffereſt them; And *There*, Thy Compassion Struggles, and Thy Bowels yern upon me! But Thou Beholdest also, The Blessings which are Comprehended

In

In Thee, And which could make me Happy, and I ſee them Not.

No, Gracious Lord! I do not Sufficiently Comprehend that *Thou art My Father*, My Spouſe, My Shepherd, My Nutrition, My Head, My Friend, My Treaſure, And my Happineſs: I do not Know the Love with which Thou Beareſt with me, but by Weak Compariſons; The Beauty and Harmony of Thy Works but by Conjectures; And The Infinity of Thy Treaſures but by The Crumbs which fall from thy Table: I do not Perceive that Immenſe Ocean of Riches which flow In Thee, And are Laid up for me: And although I do Believe it, My Faith is Cold and Languiſhing, Becauſe I have Neither the Light nor Experience of Pure Love.

Unhappy, Blind Creature that I am, I Know not where I go. And am ever Travelling on, and bending my Courſe towards thoſe Things, which caſt a greater Miſt before my Eyes: O Light Divine! who Never art Extinguiſh'd! O Eternal Brightneſs which never Undergoeſt An Eclipſe! O Day that Always Shines! O Sun which never Sets! Since Thou Diffuſeſt, thro' the Univerſe, So great A Brightneſs, wherefore Art Thou Hid from my Eyes! Or why am I ſo like thoſe Birds of Darkneſs, which Never See Leſs than at Noon-Day? Thou that haſt Enlightened and Shone upon So many Regions of Darkneſs; For Once Send forth Thy Rayes upon My Soul, that It may Behold Thee, and be Enamour'd of Thy Beauty.

Thou Seeſt Nothing In Me, O Divine Jeſus! which can be of Any Comfort unto Thee; VII.

But

But if I did but Behold Thee, if I did but Know Thee, who Could hinder Me from Loving Thee, from Embracing Thee, from Enjoying Thee! Display then Unto me, O King of Glory, the Inchantments of thy Graces; Enter In, and Exercise thy Dominion In My Soul! Open that Iron Gate; Break this Gate of Brass; Soften this Obdurate Heart, Penetrate Into the Depth of this Dark Cell where Thine Enemies Make their Retreat; Scatter them, by thy Presence, and Return Victorious, O Divine Pastor, with that Sheep within thine Arms, whom thou hast Retrieved: O Heal it, *There*, of All those Wounds it has Received from the Fierceness of Wolves; And Make it to Know Thee, and that It May Never More forsake Thee. O when wilt that Happy Moment Come!

When Shall I see Thee, O My God, *As I am Seen*, By Thee! When Shall My Soul Be fixed upon My God, According to his Love to Me! When Shall I be Taken up with Thee, as Thou art Wholly Busied about My Soul! If Thou Shouldst Seek for Sinners Only for the Good that's to be found In them, Alas! My God! we are So Destitute, and Miserable, that Thou wouldst, Always, Labour in Vain: But if Thou Seekest Them to Communicate thy Blessings to Them; Come, O My Salvation! Vouchsafe Me what Thou Pleasest; And Thou Shall find In Me whatever thou Desirest.

VIII. Of what Great Importance is it to Me, O My God, Never to be Separated from Thee! when I See Men, Like my Self, So very Irrational, and So Much their Own Enemies as To Slight and Reject Thee when Thou Comest to Them

Them, I Cannot forbear Crying out, O Strange Infatuation of the Hearts of Mankind! O Senseless Rashness! to Imagine, that in Loosing Thee, It were Possible to find Any Thing Better than Thou art!

Moses, Enlighten'd by Thy Divine Spirit, Only Consented to withdraw from Thee Till After Thou hadst Promis'd to Accompany him, and to be his Guide in the Desert: But That Unhappy People, whom Thou Hadst Given to his Guidance and Direction; And who had not Tasted The Sweetness of thy Communications, Made Themselves A Golden Calf, which They Worshipp'd and Ador'd as Their God: So True is it, that He who Knows thee; Dreads to be One Moment Deprived of Thee; And He who Knows Thee Not, is not Sensible of the Unhappiness of A Separation from Thee; Grant me, Therefore, O Thou who art The God of My Soul, Give me A True Sense of what it is to Lose Thee, that I may Never Live without Thee.

But Alas! How often have I Expell'd and driven Thee from My Heart! How Often have I Rejected Thy Sacred Inspirations, And Refus'd thy Company! These Thoughts throw Me Into Such Confusion that I know not How I shall Presume, O my God, to Appear In thy Presence! For what did I Bend after, when I Forsook Thee! Whose Subject did I Become when I Rebelled against My God? What was it that I Gained when I Lost Thee? Take Pity on Me, O Lord! I have Compar'd Thee with thy Works, and I have prefer'd the Corruption of My Own Desires, A Thousand Times Before the Sanctity of thy Law. IX.

Let

Let all my Veins Be Chang'd Into Fountains of Tears, and Let me Mourn and Weep Night and Day at Thy Feet, that I may Move thy Compassion! I have Abandon'd Thee, O my Life! And what a Life am I to Expect without Thee! I have Driven Thee away, O Thou Faithful Friend of my Soul! And where shall I Ever find another Friend Like to Thee! I have Barr'd up the Door, and shut up my Heart from Thee, O Thou who art the Source and Fountain of All Good! And what is there That's Valuable, Remaining for me, Whilst I am Deprived of my Redeemer! with what Confusion Ought I to be Covered! With what Grief and Anguish should I Be Pierced, when I Confess, Before thy Majesty, So Great Wickedness and Folly! How shall I Ever be Able to Expiate this Outragious Excess? Cast thine Eyes upon thy Self, O Thou Adored of my Soul! Before thou Turnest them Towards me; Consult thine Own Heart, Before Thou Searchest Into Mine; And Consider what thou art, Before Thou Makest Inquisition Into my Merit.

Who Hinder'd, then, and Kept Back Thine Arm? Who prevented Thee from Causing Fire from Heaven to Descend to Consume me? from Opening the Earth to Swallow me up, or to Give me up and to Deliver me Over to the Cruelty of Mine Enemies? But Rather, who Compell'd Thee to Return and Knock So Often at the Door of My Heart; to Call me; to Importune and Press me! Was it not my Interest and Duty to have Sought after Thee! It was Thine Inconceivable Love, O my God, which Continually Sollicited Thee to Prevent me!

me! O Ineffable Love! Which has Spar'd me! Which has Defended me, which has Supported me, and which Still Incessantly Attracts and Draws me to Thee! Thou art my Creator, my Protector, my Salvation, my Physician, my Father, my Lord, my Only Remedy and Cure, and all my Happiness! Be then my Succour, Change me, Heal me!

Come, Speedily, O Divine Love! For my Heart Pants after Thee! Come, and Enter In, For the Door is Open; Succour, and O, Help me! For 'Tis upon Thee I Call; Receive me, For it is to Thee I Come; Conduct and Lead me, for I Resign my Self to thy Guidance; Take Possession of me, for I Unite my Self to Thee; Begin Thy Reign, within me, from this Very Moment, and there be Thou King for Ever In my Soul, which Voluntarily Devotes it Self to thy Service, which has fixed its Affections on Thee, which is Seeking after Thee, which Embraces Thee, O my Love! O my Jesus! O my Supreme Happiness, and Sovereign Felicity!

O Holy Mother of God! Who Ever Hast Received this Divine Redeemer In Thy Soul! And Hast Never Forsaken Him, no Not Even when He Quitted you, to Search After me; Receive me Into The Number of Your Servants; Grant me A Little Cell In Your House; That your Well-Beloved Son, who Takes Delight In Dwelling with us, may find me Near You.

O Heavenly Choir! O Blessed Servants Of The House of God, Since you Are So Acceptable to Him, and that I have Been Created to Be your Companion *In Bliss*; Do not Engross This Felicity Without me; Obtain for me the Grace, that I may Never More Run

Run Astray, In this Miserable World, But that I may Continually Sigh and Breath Out my Soul After the Conclusion and End of My Banishment, to the End that In Taking my Final Leave and Farewel of this World, I may be, with you, Received Into those *Everlasting Habitations*; And Sing, for Ever, There, GLORY AND VICTORY TO THE LAMB. *Amen.*

THE Ninteenth Instance OF THE SUFFERINGS OF The BLESSED JESUS.

CHAP. XIX.

In The HARDNESS and The OBSTINACT of The Jews.

1. THE Difficulty of the Ways, was not the Most Toilsom Fatigue Our Blessed Saviour Met with in his Travels: The Obstinacy of The Jews was the Most Grievous Affliction to Him: This was A Vice Ever Inherent to That Nation,

tion, of which The Holy Scriptures afford us Infinite Examples: For, Although God had Prefer'd the Jews before all Other People, and had Work'd many Wonders, In their Favour, which had Amaz'd the Universal World; Yet All these Extraordinary Benefits Could not prevail with them to Be Constant and faithful In their Obedience to Him.

He had Extracted Them from the Loins of the Holy Patriarchs, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*; He had *Carried Them In his Arms*, as The Holy Scriptures Express it; He had Heap'd his Blessings upon them; He had Promis'd them The *Messias*; He had Sent Many Prophets Among Them; He had Chastened and Corrected Them, as his Own Children, In their Extravagancies and Back-Slidings; He had Received Them Again Into his Favour, whenever they Returned to Him; He Deliver'd Them from Their Enemies; He Provided against All their Wants and Necessities; And yet, tho' He had Prevented them with So Many Blessings, for All that, They Shook off the Yoak of Their Divine Master; Were Evermore Rebellious, Always Murmuring, Alway's Perfidious and Perjur'd Traitors, Even after they had Oblig'd and Bound Themselves to his Obedience, By the Most Sacred Vows and Solemn Promises that Could Be Made or Given.

They Attempted to Stone *Moses*, whom God had Appointed their Guide and Conducter, In the Wilderness; They Made Themselves A Golden Calf, for the Object of Their Worship, In the Sight of God, who Spake to Them Amidst the Flames of the Burning Bush;

 They

They Kill'd the Prophets; Erected Idols In the Temple; They Sacrific'd to the God of The *Gentiles*, and Abandoned the True God, The God of Their Fathers.

This Hardness of Heart is, Still, an Hereditary, Characteristick Evil, among Them, to This Day; They Preserv'd it Among The Barbarians, Even when They Groan'd Under the Most Miserable Captivity, and The Most Dreadful Chastisements and Correction of The Divine Vengeance; Tho' they Were Convinc'd of Their Errors by The Sacred Archives, which they had In Their Own Possession, they Still Resisted *That Light*, So far, as to Glory In Their Obstinacy and Wickedness: They Always Look'd upon Themselves, as the True Posterity of *Abraham*, And The People, Favourite, and Dear to God, altho' they were Deliver'd up to A REPROBATE SENSE, Deprived of the Divine Favour; And Retain'd Nothing More of their Antient Worship, than the Bare Name of God, *Whom They Honour'd with Their Lips, whilst Their Heart was Far from Him:* They are Even Fallen Into Such A Numerous Variety and Complication of Errors, Opposite to The Justice of The Divine Law; And They Have Defil'd The Truth and Purity of The Holy Scriptures with So Many Ridiculous and Absured Fables, that The Prediction of the Holy Prophet, has Been Most Apparently Accomplish'd upon that Unhappy Nation: Where He Says that

* Isa. 29. 14. **The Wisdom of Their Wisemen Shall Perish; And The Understanding of Their Prudent Men Shall Be Hid.* That is, As St. *Augustin* does Explain it, *The Jews would Have Nothing More*

Left

Left them But The Mere Letter of The Law, whose Light Should Only Serve to Blind Them the More; Whilst The Gentiles, and the Most Barbarous Nations, Would be Enlightened Thereby.

In a Word, when The Jews were Oblig'd to Obey the Law of *Moses*, They Could not be Brought to Observe it; And Since The Gospel of Christ has Given Them A Dispensation from it, They Will Still Run Counter, and Yoak Themselves Unto it: So That there is Nothing More Wanting to Them, to Finish their Infatuation, and Perfect their Blindness, and to Verify All The Prophecies, Concerning Them, But to follow Antichrist, after they Have *Refused to Acknowlege* The *True Messias*.

Those, of 'em, who are Living at This Day, Being Still as Harden'd as Their Forefathers, It is Easy to Imagine How Much This Ungrateful, Obstinate Generation, Exercis'd the Patience and Sweetness of the Blessed Jesus: *Moses* Could not Bear with them, Altho' He was A Person of the Mildest Temper Living among Mankind: They Ston'd The Prophets who were Sent to Them by Almighty God: In short All the Methods the Divine Providence, and Goodness, Contriv'd to Reclaim Them, Being In Vain, He Sent His *Only-Begotten Son*, to them, as the Last Effort and Remedy; And Instead of Receiving Him, They *Nail'd Him to A Cross*, And, By the Excess of Anguish, Rob'd Him of His Life. II.

Although the Purity of His Doctrine, The Wonder of His Miracles, and the Innumerable Train of the Good Works He did, Might

Have Soften'd the Very Rocks, He Could Scarce find Twelve Apostles, A Small Number of Disciples, and Some Devout Women, Who were Dispos'd to Follow Him; If There were any Persons of Note or Consideration, who Own Him to be what, In Truth, *He was*, they Conceal'd their Faith for Fear of the People: And at the Very Same Time, they Saw, that All that Had Been Foretold of the *Messias*, was Fulfill'd In His Person; They Shut their Eyes, They Withdrew Themselves, they Laid Snares to Trepan Him, They Oppos'd His Doctrine, They Blasphem'd and Run down His Miracles, and Sunk Into the Most Horrible and Base Ingratitude: For, After Having Seen the Blessed Jesus *Heal the Sick, and Raise The Dead*, they Sought for Means How to Kill Him.

III. As He Expounded to them, One Day, A Passage of *Isaiah*, which was Accomplisht In Him, *They Drove Him, Out of The City, and Carried Him to the Top of An High Mountain, with A Design to Cast Him Down Headlong from it*: They Could not Bear Even that He Should *Work Miracles* on the Sabbath-Day, They Proscribed Those who Follow'd Him; In a Word, They Shew'd, upon Every Occasion, the Obstinacy and Hatred which they Bare against Him: He Understood their Thoughts, and He Oftentimes Discover'd Them Even unto Themselves; He Answer'd all Their Questions In the Most Convincing Manner; He Confounded Their Priests In the Presence of the People, and Altho' These, Themselves, were Smitten with His Doctrine, and the Miracles which He Wrought, they Continu'd Still to Adhere to Those False Guides, In Conspiring Against Him,

Him, to Urge Him, and Give the Vogue for His Death, and to Take The Vengeance and Guilt of His MOST PRECIOUS BLOOD *Upon Themselves, and Upon Their Children.*

This Nation, Ever Infidel and Incredulous, Never would Open Their Eyes to the Light; And, Awaken'd Not from the Deep Lethargy, In which it was Absorp'd, Neither upon the *Arrival Of The Sages*, who Publish'd The *Birth of Our Blessed Saviour*, nor By the *Exultation of the Shepherds* who had *Seen the New-Born Infant*, nor By the Testimony of St. *John Baptist*, nor By the *Sound of A Voice from Heaven*, which was Heard at His Baptism, nor By His Presence, nor By the Holiness of His Doctrine, nor By the Power of His Miracles, The Effect of which they Saw Upon Themselves, Upon their Parents, their Children, their Neighbours, and their Friends: No, not when they Saw *Much more, How the Rocks Were Rent In Twain, The Earthquakes Shook, and Wav'd the Element, The Sun was Totally Eclips'd*, The Centurion, an Idolater, Confess'd that *Jesus Christ* Was *Verily* and In Truth, *The Son of God*; Even *then*, after All, This Unhappy People Persisted in their Obstinacy, and Hardened Themselves Continually More and More.

The Blessed Jesus Shew'd them, upon A Thousand Occasions, How Pungent and Afflicting this Harden'd Obstinacy of Theirs was unto Him: He Set the Example of the Ninevites Before them, who * *Repented at the Preaching of the Prophet Jonas*; And that of The Queen *of Saba*, who Came So Far to † *Hear the Wisdom of Solomon*:

* St. Mat. 12. 41.

† Ibid. v. 42.

He Remonstrated to Them Their Obstinacy, In Comparison with The Less Guilt of *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*, Than That of *Tyre* and *Sidon*; Shewing Them, That *These Prostituted Cities would have been Converted, Had They Beheld The Miracles which These People Saw.* He Grievously Lamented at This, That † *He Would have Gather'd Them together, as A Hen Gathereth Her Chickens, under her Wings, But They Would not:* He Set the Image of their Obstinacy Before their Eyes; sometimes In Parables, and other whiles by some Questions that He Proposed to Them; And He Convinc'd Them by Their Own Answers, In Which They Condemn'd Themselves, Unwilling as They Were to be Amended: When He made his Entry Into *Jerusalem*, Amidst The Hosannah's of The People, He Wept Over That City, which was to Bring Down such Curses upon It self, by The Harden'd Obstinacy of its Inhabitants: He was Touch'd most Sensibly at This, to Think how that, After They had *Rejected The Very Son of God, They Would, One Day, Receive Antichrist, as A just Judgment upon Their Blindness and Infatuation.*

† St. Mat. 23. 37.

To Understand, with what Sentiments of Grief and Compassion He Foresaw The Destruction of The *Jewish* Nation, there Needs Nothing More than to Consider with what Indefatigable Application He Labour'd for Their Salvation, Although All His Labour was In Vain: Their Harden'd Obstinacy was so Great An Affliction to Him, that He found it Necessary to Prepare his Apostles Against it, to The End that, when They found the Like Stubbornness In Their Brethren, they should

not

not be Discourag'd, but fortifie Themselves from The Example of Their Master, Who, Tho' He Was THE SON OF GOD, Could not Overcome The Hardness of The *Jews*, nor Win Them Over to Embrace His Divine Doctrine.

We may see, particularly, In Two Instances, what A Fatal Mischief This Evil Quality of Obstinacy and Hardness is: First, from Hence, That No Limited Goodness Could Ever Bear with it; And that to Pardon or Dispense with it, is The Greatest Instance of An Infinite Bounty: For to Receive Him that is Penitent and Submissive; to Forgive A Transgressor who Confesses his Iniquity, is the Result of An Ordinary Compassion; But, To do Much for An Ungrateful Wretch, who is Careless and Insensible; To Undergo a Great Deal for A Miscreant to whom it will do no Good, This is the Peculiar Characteristick of A Generosity that is Immense and Incomprehensible. IV.

When *Moses* So Earnestly Beseech'd God to Pardon Those Who Made The Golden Calf for Their God, And had Conjur'd Him, by such Pressing Instances, not to forsake Those In The Wilderness, whom He had Drawn Out of their *Egyptian* Captivity, by so Great Miracles; All That He Could Obtain Was, that God would not Exterminate and Quite Destroy them; But that He would send An Angel to them, In *Moses*'s stead, to Conduct Them: And Almighty God Gave No Other Reason for his Indignation, but that * *That People was of an Inflexible Obstinacy*; And that *if He Walk'd In the Midst of them*, They would still Pro- * Exod. 32. 9.

voke his Wrath and Vengeance against Them, And He should be obliged to Destroy Them All, to Punish Their Hard-Heartedness.

Moses having Desired, at the same Time, *that He might See The Face of God*, if He had found Favour In his Sight, And God having Promised Him that He would Vouchsafe Him that Blessing, but Only Shew him so much of his Brightness as was sufficient to Assure him that He was Acceptable to his Majesty; The Divine Glory Pass'd before *Moses*, who was Sensible of it Without Seeing it, and who Heard These Words: * *The Almighty God, Merciful, and Gracious, Long-Suffering, and Abundant In Goodness and Truth; Keeping Mercy for Thousands, forgiving Iniquity, and Transgression, and Sin; And That Will by No Means Clear the Guilty, Visiting the Iniquity of The Fathers upon the Children, and Upon The Childrens Children, unto the Third, And to the Fourth Generation.*

Exod. 34. 6.

At This Voice *Moses* Prostrated himself Before the Lord, and making use of These Comfortable Names which God had Suggested to him, He Beseech'd Him again that He would Vouchsafe to Direct and Go along with his People: For Since, Said He, They are So Harden'd, Since They are so Untractable, an Angel will never be able to Support Them: *There is none but Thee, O Lord, whose Goodness is So Great, that Thou Visitest not Iniquity beyond the fourth Generation*; And *Who Extendest Thy Mercy Unto Thousands: There is none but Thee who Can forgive such Ingratitude.* Almighty God was moved with the Prayer of his Servant;

vant; He Pardon'd the People, and Promis'd that He Himself, would Go along with them, and be their Leader.

In the Next Place: That which Clearly Shews The Enormity of This Evil, is, That The Blessed Jesus, The Essence and Model of All Perfection, seems to have Levelled All His Doctrine to This One Point; which is, That We Should † *Learn of Him to be Meek and Lowly In Heart:* Because that Lowliness and Sincere Humility are *The Foundation* of All Other Vertues, An Excellent Disposition and Qualification for the *Divine Light*, and All Other Gifts of Grace; And are Directly Opposite to Obstinacy and an Harden'd Spirit. For why does Man, with so much Obstinacy, Refuse to Bear The Yoak of Christ? Where Can He place his Confidence Better? Where Can He find A more secure Refuge? And what is He himself, But A Vessel of Clay, full of Mire and Corruption?

* St. Mat. 11. 29.

How does The Son of God Abase Himself, Even so far as to Bear with our Continual Disobedience? Why does He Restrain his Vengeance? Why does He not Reduce *These Worms of The Earth*, Into Dust, who Dare Presume to Rebel Against Their Creator, were it not that His Mercy should Appear In A Greater Strength, and shine more Bright thro' Our Unworthiness! He Debases His Majesty, He Conceals His Omnipotence, He Becomes, Upon Our Account, a Model of Sweetness and Humility, to Confound The Pride and Obdurancy of the Heart of Man, so Opposite and Rebellious to The Divine Will. This is what made St. *Paul* say, In this Terrible Expression, whilst

whilst In Confusion at the Perverseness of Mankind, † *Dost Thou not know that The Goodness of God Leadeth Thee to Repentance? But after Thy Hardness and Impenitent Heart, Treasurest up unto thy self Wrath Against The Day of Wrath!*

† Rom. 2. 4, 5.

V. There is no Vice, whatsoever, not only more Opposite and Contrarious to The Spirit of God, But even to Human Nature it self, which is *Given to Change*, which Can Pass from Evil to Good, and be Governed by Reason, than This Invincible Sin of Obstinacy and a Harden'd Wilfulness: The *Fallen Angels* Could find No Remedy, after their Apostacy, Because They are Naturally Incapable of Changing, when They have Once Chosen; And It had been In Vain to have Given Them More Leisure to Examine the Side which They should Take, since They Knew, at first, All that They Could have Known afterwards: But Mankind, whose Soul Exerts itself thro' Organs of Flesh, sees not Things All at Once; He wants Time to Weigh and Consider Matters: From whence 'tis, That He is Capable of being Convinc'd of his Errors, Changing his Resolutions, And Rectifying what he has done Amiss: Therefore when He Hardens his Heart, He Acts against The Disposition of his Own Nature, Like the Rebellious Angels; He Continues, as They do, Inflexible In his Transgression, And, when he Comes to die, He justly Undergoes the Same Torment With Them, since he harden'd Himself In the Same Spirit of Disobedience, whilst He Lived.

The

The Adherence to One's Own Judgment, and Self-Will, is The Main Spring from whence this Great Misery Arises: 'Tis Impossible to Conceive the fatal Consequences of This Vice: One may make it Appear, sometimes Under The Mask of Vertue: But if A Man be not Very Careful, In Due Time, to stifle This Adversary within him, He will, by Degrees, Become such a Slave to his Own Sentiments and Opinion, and that Even In The most Gross Mistakes, as if they Were the most Evident, and Convincing Truths; And, at Last, fall Into An Obstinacy, like That of the very Devils.

From Hence Arise those Different Degrees of An Harden'd Spirit, which Lead Men, by so many Steps, to This Diabolical and Infernal Disobedience: For, In the first Place, The Habit of Only following One's Own Light, makes a Man Less faithful to Observe The *Law of God*: And then, He Allows Himself more Liberty to Transgress, altho' He has still some Recoils and Scruples upon his Soul when he does so; But by frequent Lapses, and the Little Care He takes to Correct his Vices, He falls Into A Spiritual Languishment and Decay; He may have some Inclination to Extricate Himself out of this Sad Condition; But He finds No Strength, In Himself, to Bewail his past Sin and Folly; Altho' He is Conscious thereof, and has some Faint Inclinations to Repent of them: This Unhappy Evil is not, yet, Without Remedy; But The most Effectual Means of All, In My Opinion, is to Throw Himself, at The Feet of The *Crucified Jesus*; To Humble his Soul, In his Presence, VI.

ſence, as much as 'tis Poſſible for Him to do, with an Entire Diffidence and Diſtruſt of himſelf; And moſt Earneſtly to Beſeech Him, to ſhew the Divine Virtue and Efficacy of his moſt *Precious Blood*, by ſoftening the Obdurancy of Our Stony Harden'd Hearts.

I have known A Sinner, who, being Willing to Forſake his Evil Courſe, and not having the Power to Deplore his Tranſgreſſions according to his Deſire, went from his Houſe One Day, Overcome with Grief, without knowing whither he was Going, to ſeek ſome Comfort; And, In his Way, as he was Going out, he met a poor Man, who ſeem'd to be Under Great Affliction; At which he was Exceedingly Mov'd, And Calling to Mind that Our Bleſſed Saviour Said, that He would

† St. Mat. † *Look upon the Leaſt Kindneſs ſhewn to Any of his Little Ones, as if it had been done to his Own Perſon*, He Return'd with the Poor Creature Into his Houſe, and Giving him an Alms, he Caſt Himſelf at his Feet, as if he had been In the Very Preſence of The Bleſſed Jeſus: And, In this Humble Poſture, he ſaid within himſelf, as ſpeakrng to his Redeemer, whom thro' Faith he look'd upon In The Perſon of That Poor Object; Lord Jeſus! ſays he, Thou art In this Diſtreſſed Soul! O that I could but Preſent Thee with my Heart! But That is ſo Petrified and Obdurate, that I Dare not Offer it to Thee, and Thou Wouldſt Not Accept it! But yet Vouchſafe, I Beſeech Thee, to Receive This Bread which I offer Thee at this Time; And Do Thou New-Mould my Heart According to Thine Own Pleaſure. This Humiliation of his was ſo very effectual, that

that In an Instant he found his Heart Melted, and His Eyes All Bath'd In Tears, And God was afterwards very Merciful and Gracious unto him.

When A Man Neglects to Pare off the first Searings of his Heart, He Gradually Goes on to Harden In his Obstinacy, and to be In Love with his Defilements; and Then he Lulls himself In a false Security and Quiet, and Perseveres therein without Reluctancy or Misgivings: He is Conscious of his Guilt, but has Neither the Inclination to Wash it off, nor the Power to Resist Temptation: And then the Prostitute is much more sensible of the Pleasures of Sin, than of the Miseries that Attend it, or the Wretchedness of his Condition. VII.

They who Live Under These Circumstances, being upon the Very Point of Stifling those small Remains of Conscience they have Left, have Great Need, In the first Place, to Frequent the Sacraments, that by Often Renewing the Spirit of Grace Within Them, They may Obtain Strength Sufficient to Enable Them to Resist and Withstand Vice: And, In the next, Submit Themselves to the Direction of some Prudent Confessor, who, Knowing their Temptations, their Inclinations, their Engagements, and the Condition they find them in, may Apply Proper Remedies for their Distempers; For if these Prescriptions be neglected, at such a time, The Sinful Creature will soon be Harden'd In his Iniquity to such A Degree, that his WOUND WILL BE INCURABLE, because he will loose all Sense of his Guilt, and Despise All Wholesome Application.

cation. Now See the Third and Last Degree of Hardness and Impenitency of Heart.

Then The Profligate Can No Longer Endure Either Advice or Remonstrance; He is Asham'd to Correct himself, and Glories In his Obstinacy: And this Carries him to such a Degree of Hardness, that if he had, before, Any Thoughts, of Bettering his Life, this would be sufficient to Change his Purpose, or prevail with him to Lay aside the Design on't. To make him Look upon the most charitable Correction as an Outrage; The most wholesome Advice as a Violence offer'd to him, And Choose Rather to Bid Defiance to, and Renounce All Fear of God, than Express Any the Least Rational Respect Unto Him, or to Regard Man.

If A Man, who is Under Such A Deplorable Condition, does not use his Utmost Strength to Extricate himself Out of it, He Builds A Wall of Brass betwixt his God and him; He Habituates himself to his Wounds; He Becomes so Corrupt, that he Turns the Balm that should heal him Into Poison, and Makes the Service, and Good Turns, that are Offer'd to him, oftentimes more hurtful to him than the Very Sin he has Committed. Such was, sometime, that of *Pharaoh*, Whose Harden'd Obstinacy Daily Encreas'd by The Miracles he Beheld: Such also were The *Jews*, of whom *Isaiah* has foretold, that *Seeing They Would not Perceive*, who were so Blind as to Set themselves against That which should have Healed Them: So that The Instructions, and Benefits That were Dispens'd to Them, by The *Blessed Jesus*, Rendered them but the more Guilty;

Guilty; and They Became but the more Wicked by All that Was Capable of Making them A Better People: Would to God That This fatal Obstinacy Terminated with that Nation! But, Alas! We meet but with too much of It, at this Day, among Christians! And Although Our Blessed Saviour Cannot be Affected with Our Rebellions, In his Heavenly Mansion, Whither no Sorrow can Ascend, or Enter; most Certain 'tis, That They were Present to his Righteous Soul, whilst He Liv'd upon the Earth, and that He was more Pierc'd with the Foresight of OUR HARDEN'D OBSTINACY, than with That of The *Jews*.

To Give Men up to their Own Vile Passions, and Let them Loose to the Swing of their own Perverse Wills, is the most *Dreadful Stroke* of the Divine Wrath and Vengeance, and the Beginning of That Privation, and Eternal Separation, which is the *Portion of The Damned!* This Hardness of Heart is the Spring of All The Greatest Evil that Can Befal us; This which *Nailed and Fastened The Son of God to The Cross*; Which has Kindled The Persecutions of The Church of Christ, whence All the Heresies have Arose which have Infested The Christian World; which has Corrupted and Debauch'd The Innocence and Purity of so many Immortal Souls, and spread So many *Errors*, In *Contradiction* to *The Faith*, and direct Opposition to *The Doctrine of The Lord Jesus Christ*. In A Word, This is the Parent of Damnation, which Engenders A Generation to be Accursed for Ever of God. But Since The Blessed Jesus Himself could not Vanquish, nor Overcome, the Obstinacy of The Stiff-necked

Jews,

Jews, by his Own Presence, what Ought He not to Fear, who, at such a Vast Distance, from his Redeemer, Passes his Life In An Hardened Defiance of him, In The Clutches of *The Deceiver!*

A

Divine Contemplation,

Upon the Hardness of Heart.

1. O Jesus! *Meek and Lowly of Heart!* Thou Son of The Living God! Thou Lord and Master of my Soul! Thou Almighty, and Most Charitable Physician! Thou Hast not Less Power to Heal my Sores, than Patience to Bear with my Transgressions; Since Thou Endurest Them for no Other purpose but to Cure them: O Let them not Go on Till they Become Incurable, and Separate me from Thee, for Ever, Who art my *Salvation*, and *my Life!* Thou Knowest how many Reasons I have to Distrust my Self, and Incessantly to Implore thy Mercy: Continual Hazards and Dangers of Losing thee Arise within me, and I Cannot Be Saved But by Thee.

Thou hast Said that *The Good Man Treasures up, In his Heart, Good Things, and the Evil Man Treasureth up there Evil Things:* Who is Truly Good, O Lord, If Thou art not So! And who is

is Truly Evil, Unless I am He? 'Tis from my Heart, that all Those Evils do Arise, which Thou Beholdest, and which Thou Bearest with; Those Evil Appetites which keep me at Such A Distance from thee, That Inward Deafness which Prevents my Listening to thy Voice, That Harden'd Obstinacy which Prompts me to Rebell against thy Commandments, That Lukewarmness and Unconcern which makes thy Truths Insipid to my Taste; That Negligence, In thy Service, and all those Other Defects and Infirmities, within me, that are So Displeasing to thy Perfect Goodness.

My Ruin is Entirely Owing to My Self, and Results from the Fountain of My Own Depraved Heart; But if This Fountain were to Run with a Rapid Stream, and Throw off its Soil, it would, at Last, be Purified and Become Clear and Agreeable In thy Sight! But alass! My God, It Contains Much more Filth and Corruption than it Throws out, So that it Requires to be Always a Cleansing; And all the Evil it is not Guilty of, And that it is no Worse, is the Gift of thy Divine Grace! For when I withdraw My Self from Thee, I am then fit for All Degrees of the most Vile Transgression, and Unworthy of All that's Good: As Thou hast Given me A Heart Capacious of the Greatness of thy Blessings, when it is Deprived and Empty of them, there is no Evil Whatsoever But what finds a Place of Reception and Entertainment There! O Help and Enable me, Thou Divine Efficacy! And Come to my Assistance! For the Abyss of My Misery Cannot be fill'd up, But by the Ocean of thy Mercy; And thou Only Canst

Expell from My Heart the Poison that is Entered in, and Lodged there.

II. O My Creator! Who hast formed me Out of the Same Lump with the Rest of the Sinful World; I am A Greater Sinner than all the Rest of My Fellow Creatures! Or, if I am not Quite So Bad, 'Tis to thy Mercy, that I am Indebted for it; The *Jews* were, and are Still, at this Day, the Sons of *Adam* as, we are; Thou Hast Dignified them with the Honour of thy Promises, and Heap'd thy Blessings on them; Thou Hast dwelt among them; Thou Hast Informed them in Thy Divine Truths; Thou Hast Wrought thy Wonders Before their Eyes; Thou Hast Shewn them, In the Views of thy Glory, the Perfection of all Graces, and the Accomplishment of All Prophecies, and yet they Have not Known, they Have not Acknowledg'd thee.

Thou art Always Blazoning thy Brightness before their Eyes, O thou Eternal Light and Splendor! And their Darkness Encreases, and Be-mists them Daily More and More! Thou Discovereſt their Sins unto Them, and they See them not; Thou Laboureſt to Win them to Thee, By the Charms of thy Sweetness, and they Become the more Untractable and Stubborn; Thou didst Condescend to go Into Their Houses, Thou didst Converse with Them, of Thy Goodness; Thou Healedst their Sick, and they Still Refused to Acknowlege Thee: They Hated thy Very *Light*, itself, thy Truth, thy Mighty Operations, thy Life, thy Person; And they Preferr'd their own Iniquities to thy Goods and Blessings; Thou didst Bewaile their Misery, and they Rejoiced

In

n them; Thou didst Labour and take Pains to withdraw them from their Ruin, and they Continu'd Still the More Attack'd Daily to that Obstinacy and Wickedness which pull'd it down upon them; And These Inveterate Prostitutions Made them Flee Both the *Physician* and the *Cure*.

Is it Possible, O Divine Jesus! That These *Clouds of Darkness* should be Stronger than *The Light*! That they should Increase in thy Presence; And that all thy Pains, to Dispel and Scatter Them, should be in Vain! Thou Couldst not Overcome the Obstinacy of the Harden'd *Jews*, Neither by the Favours Thou didst Bestow upon them, nor By thy Delivering them from So Many Evils; Neither By those Eternal Torments Thou didst Threaten them withal, nor By the Ravishing Inchantments of thy Presence, and the Charms of thy Conversation: From whence Comes this, Most Gracious Lord! Thy Omnipotence, Is that Diminish'd? And that *Fountain of Living Water*, Is that Grown Dry? Thou Gavest up thy Precious Life for them, Thou didst wash Them with THY BLOOD, and they Were not Soften'd; But all Along Persisted, Still, with their Posterity, in the Same Accursed Obstinacy and Defiance: They Call upon thee, They Pray unto thee, They Magnifie thy Name In Praise, They Acknowledge thee for Their God, In the Holy Scriptures, which they have In Their Hands; they Read, Incessantly, thy Word, Therein, thy Blessings, thy Miraculous Works, and yet they will Neither Acknowledge thee, nor Love Thee; How Can I Behold This Dreadful Judgment, upon them,

Them, O my God! and not Tremble for My own Soul!

III. No Creature has Offer'd Them any Violence, or Compell'd Them; None has Either Blinded them, or Harden'd them: They have Infatuated Themselves, They have Seared Their Own Consciences and Souls: Hell itself has Acknowledg'd Thee, O Lord! The Very Devils TREMBLED at Thy Word; Death Submitted to Thy Power, The Beasts of the Field, and The Inanimate Part of The Creation, the Elements Understood Thy Voice; Heaven, which had been Shut up to the Righteous, Open'd, at Thy Commandment, to Receive the Thief; And Those Souls which Thou hast Created for Thy Self, which are Thy Proper Dwelling, and whose Happiness Thou art, Know Thee Not, Perceive Thee Not, They do not Desire Thee, and do not Receive Thee.

What shall Become of me, O my God! If Thou withdraw Thy Grace from me! How often have I felt this Obdurateness of Heart Within me. And if it has not yet Entirely finish'd my Destruction, Is it not Entirely Owing to Thy Mercy? No sooner was I Born but Thou didst Replenish me with Thy Grace; How often hast Thou Call'd me Since? How often Press'd me, and Sollicited me! How many Troubles and Dangers hast Thou Suffer'd me to Run Into, that I might be mov'd from Thence to Return to Thee! How many Sins hast Thou Forgiven me? How Long hast Thou been Patient and Forborn me? How Many Sacred Truths hast Thou inform'd me in? How Many Favours hast Thou done me?

Whence

Whence is it, Then, that I am ſuch a Wretched, Unhappy Creature!

I do not Complain of Thee, Gracious Lord! I am Sufficiently Senſible that all my Miſery proceeds Entirely from My ſelf! Thou art always with me; But I am not with Thee! I Confeſs my Sins unto Thee, But I do not Correct my ſelf, and Amend! I Receive Thy Sacred Body, and keep it cloſe within me; And yet I do not Hear Thee; I do not Love Thee; I do not find Thee! O Divine Jeſus! My Harden'd Obſtinacy is Greater than That of the *Jews* was; For, They did not Believe In Thee; But I Acknowledge Thee to be *The Son of the Living God*; They did not Receive Thee; But I Confeſs thee and Receive thee; It is True, That I do not Leave off my Sinful Courſes, to Sooth my Follies, and Indulge my Imperfections, and to Dwell and Lodge In the Sink of my Miſeries; This very Soleciſm muſt needs be True, O My God! That I ſhould ſtill Love and Chooſe This Condition! For if I abhor'd my Sins, and did not chooſe my Miſeries, I ſhould be deliver'd from them! Pity my Caſe, Moſt Merciful Redeemer! Soften this Stony Heart of Mine! Let it not Grow Stronger, Let it not Deprive me of Thee, my Only God! O Caſt Thine Eyes upon This Sinful Creature, who is the Workmanſhip of Thy Bounty, and The Price of Thy *Precious Blood!* And as Fire Naturally ſplits Rocks In Twain, O do Thou, by the Flames of Thy Love, Melt the Petrified Obdurancy of this Harden'd Heart Within me!

IV.

Thou Canſt not ſay, My Dear, Offended God, that Thou haſt not An Inclination to do This;

But That Thou haſt not the Power: That Sinful Woman in the Goſpel had a Sear'd Conſcience; But her Harden'd Heart was Melted at Thy Feet; Theſe Sacred Feet, Are They, at this Inſtant, of a Leſs Efficacy than They were at that Juncture? She Lovingly Embraced Them; And as for me, I Behold Them Pierced with Nails, and Ready to Diffuſe that Vertue upon me which flows from Them; If She purchas'd and obtain'd her Converſion by Thoſe Tears with which ſhe Be-dew'd Them, Thou, O Lord, Canſt make a Mine Flow In Rivers, and Qualifie me alſo with Thoſe Other Graces Thou haſt in Store for me: Her Heart Sigh'd and Panted after Thee; Mine is alſo Longing for Thee; But if my Deſires be not Strong, and Sufficiently Fervent, do Thou Add unto them what is Wanting.

Do not Thou Set Thy Self, O my God! Againſt This Poor Sinner, who deſires nothing ſo much, as to Melt his Soul with Thy Love: St. *Peter* was ſo Obſtinate in Renouncing Thee, that if Thou, In Thy Mercy, hadſt not taken Care of Him, He had repeated his Guilt another Time: But He was Soften'd and Converted by one Single Caſt of Thine Eyes; Theſe Balls of Sacred Light, have They then Loſt the Power of Mollifying Hearts! O Caſt ſuch a Look upon me, Thou Father of Mercy, And I ſhall be Healed! What a Sear'd Conſcience was That of the Thief, when he was fixed upon the Croſs Beſide Thee! He had Offended Thee, during the Whole Courſe of his Life, And, he, beſides, Blaſphemed Thee at the Inſtant of his Execution; But Thy Gracious Goodneſs Transform'd him in a Moment, and Opened A Manſion for him, That Day, In Paradise. Will

Will there be none but me alone, who shall not Experience that *Almighty Power, who, being Lifted up from the Earth, draws All Things after Him!* Remember Thou Me, Most Gracious Lord, tho' I am so Unhappy as to forget Thee; Thou didst not Mark what St. *Paul* was Eager after, and Pray'd to Thee for, when † *Breathing Nothing but Threatnings and Slaughter*, he Persecuted Thy Faithful Servants, out of Hatred to Thy Name: He was Chang'd Into Another Man, and Soften'd and Overcome by that Very Name, He So Maliciously, and Furiously bore against; And Became a Chosen Vessel, to Transmit and Propagate Thy Divine Name Among All Nations: In Sacred Rapture He Utter'd This Exclamation, Afterwards, That * *He had No Other Life but what he Liv'd In Thee, and wherein Thou didst Live in Him*; And He Loved Thee with so Fervent a Flame, That he Presum'd upon This Assurance, that *There was Nothing Either In Heaven, or On Earth, or In the Infernal Deep, that Could Separate, from his Heart, The Flame that was Burning in Him towards Thee!* Lord Grant that I may say unto Thee, In Astonishment at Thy Glory —— *What wouldst Thou have me Do?* And, with Holy *David*, *O Teach me Thy Will! Direct me In the Way of Thy Commandments; And keep me, always under thy Hand, and Under the Shadow of thy Wings.*

* *Act.* 9. 1.

* *Gal.* 2. 20.

V. But of what Use or Advantage will it be to me, O Sweet Jesus! To ask This Grace, This Tenderness of Heart, which I desire so, If, I am Hardening my self all this While; If I stop my Ears, and am Deaf and Insensible to All that is so Necessary for me, and most Requisite

to prepare me for it? I do not find Thee harden'd against me, when I am never such a Stranger, and at such a Distance from Thee; But Thou art Easy and Endearing, and Ready to Receive me whenever I Return to Thee: I cannot, with Justice, Complain, that Thou hast been, In any Respect, Unkind unto me; But, on the Contrary, I ought for Ever to Bless Thy Goodness, Most Gracious God, for This, that, when I come unto Thee, Loaded and Weigh'd down with Sins, Harden'd, and almost Reprobate, I Return, from Thy Comfortable Presence, Mollified and full of Blessed Assurance.

I will Acknowledge It, in Thy Presence, to my Own Confusion, and the Glory of Thy Mercy! When, Conniving at my Miseries, Thou hast Permitted me to Approach Thee, and to Embrace Thy Feet; When Thou hast been so Gracious as to Give Ear to those Expressions which came Lingring out of my Lukewarm Heart, faintly desiring Thy Love and Favour, did I ever find Thee Harden'd, or Deaf to my Prayer? Thou hast, Always, Appear'd under A Forgetfulness of my Worthless Disposition; Thou hast spoken to my Heart; Thou hast Always, Vouchsafed me the Favour to Confer, to Treat with Thee as with Thine Equal; At This very Moment I feel my self, Glowing with Thy Love; and Ready to do Thy Pleasure; All Thy Will; I Grudge, and Regret All *that Mis-spent Time*, which I did not Employ In Loving Thee; I mortally Abhor Every Thing which has Estrang'd me to Thee, and Depriv'd me of Thy Presence, and all those Ravishing Endearments which Thou wouldst have

have Imparted to me, and Communicated to My Soul. Thou Knoweſt, Lord, what Thou wouldſt have, *then*, whiſper'd Secretly to My Soul, without Noiſe or any Thing Articulate: And, as for me, I am Convinc'd that All the Pleaſures of Life, put together, have nothing, In them, Comparable to the Enjoyment of One of Theſe Happy Moments.

If, by Relapſing Into My former Extravagances, I ſhould Loſe the Taſt of thy Preſence; And, Afterwards, Sunk down with the Weight of my Corruptions, I ſhould Return to Thee, In Order to be Relieved, I ſhould find Thee Still to be the Very Same, Always Eaſy to be Entreated, Always Sweet, and Tender, Faithful, and full of Mercy and Compaſſion; What is Become of this Senſe of thee, O Thou Eternal Sweetneſs! Where is it that I have Loſt it! At the Very Time thou hideſt thy Self from me, for my Good, and thereby wouldſt Inſpire me with an Ardour to Breath Fervently and be Longing after Thee, to Seek thee Out, to Enquire, of Every Creature, after my God; Thou Wouldeſt not Let Me be In Pain, Long; Thou Wouldeſt be Nearer to me than I Imagin'd, I Soon ſhould Behold the Light, and find my Self Entirely Chang'd and Altogether A New Creature: Then, Forgetting my Baniſhment, and my Miſery, I ſhould Straitly Unite Myſelf to Thee, Reſolved Never to Forſake Thee More.

From whence Comes it, then, that I have Abandon'd thee Again? O Thou who art the God of my Soul! Who is able to Separate me from Thee? Why have I depriv'd and Rob'd my

my Self of So Great A Good? How is it that I am Relapsed Into this Obdurate Insensibility and Hardness? Is it not A Greater Sin to Harden and Sear My Soul, thus, After I have Received So many Instances of thy Bounty, than If I had Never Met with any Tokens of thy Goodness? I Implore thy Mercy, O my my Saviour! Suffer me no Longer to Depart from thee! Nor to Infatuate and Be-mist my Own Soul, by my Willful Obstinacy, amidst So Great Light and Conviction, Least I Finally be absorp'd In this Lethargy of my Sins! If I have no Pretence nor Merit to the Blessings of thy Endearments, which I have So Often forfeited, by my own Sin and Folly, Give me, at Least, A Sense of my Own Wretched Condition, and of the Need I have of thy Merciful Assistance, to Resist and Conquer the Temptations of my own Perverse Will; Give me Strength Incessantly, to Break this Stubborn Heart; which the Very Fire Cannot Pentrate, that I May, at Least, be Sensible of the Blessings I have Lost, and abhor those Vices which have Brought me Into this Condition!

VI Vouchsafe me the Blessing of thy Love and Compassion, O Divine Jesus! And Engrave it So deep In my Heart, that I may Truly Say, as thine Apostle did, * *Who shall Seperate me from the Love of Jesus Christ!* Is There Any Thing In the Universe that Deserves My Love, and that Can Recompence to the Soul the Privation of its Redeemer! When I Loose Thee, for A Friend, for any Worldly Gain, or Pleasure, What Return of Profit or Advantage Can these Make me? If I Renounce thy Love, on the Account

* Rom. 8. 35.

Account of Avoiding a Little Pain, I am Presently Carried away With A Thousand vain Engagements, which Bring me Into Endless Trouble and Vexation! If I forsake Thee for my Friends, I Soon Experience their Infidelity and Falshood. If I Seek Occasions of Mirth and Jollity, or to Regale my Soul with Sensual Delights, Abstracted from My God, I find My Self, In the Conclusion, Drawn Into A Labyrinth of Sorrow and Sadness, and Vexation! If I Neglect my Devotion, thro' a Sordid Lukewarmness and Supineness, I Give my Self up to my Souls Enemies, and fall into Temptations; In short, Let it be which way it will, I forfeit thy Love, I Live, *an Exile from my God*, A Cast away from his Benediction, Deprived of his Blessings, Languishing, and Consumptive In Religion, But Vigorous and Strong Enough in the Pursuit, and Glutting of, my Corrupt and Sensual Lusts and Inclinations.

Is it Possible, O My God! That any Creature, in the Universe, should Be able to Separate me from thee, and Thy Divine Communications! If I Compare the Time I Squander away in these Scandalous and Despicable Amusements, The Bitter, and Regret they Leave Behind them, and the Vileness of those Trifles with which my Heart is So Taken up, with the Ravishing Endearments, and The Treasures I Lose, in forsrkeing Thee; Alass! in what a Wretched State do I find my Self! And, that which Adds the Greatest Weight to My Misery, is that I my Self am Convinc'd of it, I See it with Mine Eyes, and Can't Tell What the Inchantment is that holds me, nor

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by what A fatal Power I am Prevented from *Running to the Fragrant Odour of Thy Perfumes:* Ah! Blessed God! O That Nothing might Separate me from Thy Love! And Since Obedience, Meekness and Humility, are the Paths that Lead to thee, And the most Proper and Effectual Remedies to Work my Cure, I Implore Them of Thee from the Bottom of my Heart! Correct and Humble me According to thy Pleasure! Make me to Distrust my Self, and to Impose Effectual Pennance upon My Own Soul; That, as I am Already Indebted to Thee for My Very Being, what I now am, and what Ever Else of Good shall Happen to me; I May Be Indebted to Thee also for The Cure of All my Miseries which at this Very Moment I Labour Under.

When Shall I Behold Thee, O My God! The Sovereign Master, and Peaceable Possessor of My Soul! I am So Blind, that I Cannot See the Paths and Dangerous Meanders I Rove in, nor the Dangers I Incur, Every Day I Live, Of falling into *The Pit*; Nor do I So Much as Offer thee A Prayer for my Deliverance; But, Thou, O Lord, which Wanteſt no Instruction; from Whom nothing Can be Hid, and who Perfectly Beholdest All Things; Work the Wonders Of thy Mercy, In this Heart Of Mine, that's Full and Over-Burthened with Miseries and Sorrow.

O Queen

O Queen of Angels, Who Pleadeſt with Thy Son for Sinners, Thou Pure and Chaſt Habitation for Chriſt to Dwell in, Moſt Charitable Mediatrix for Obſtinate and Sinful Souls; It is the Will of God that I ſhould Obtain, by Your Interceſſion that which I have No Pretence or Merit to In my Self; Since You Know the Seeds that Produce this Canker of Rebellion within me, Let There Flow, from That Foundation of Mercy, which Thou Haſt Brought Forth, from thy Womb, Into the World, *This Living Water*; Let it Diſtil upon my Soul, and, at Laſt, Mollifie and Soften the Obdurateneſs of My Heart.

O Ye Happy Denizens of the King Eternal! Who are Throughly Penetrated with The Divine Love, Let not my Heart be Harden'd, and Rebellious Againſt The Impreſſions of His Holy Spirit! Impart and ſhed Some Little ſhare of Your Abundant Plenitude upon me; and Water This Barren Soil, So that After I have, here Below, Participated your Graces, I may Partake of them In the Communion of Your Glory In *That Better World*. *Amen*.

THE

THE Twentieth Instance OF THE SUFFERINGS OF Our Blessed Saviour.

CHAP. XX.

In The False Judgments *which They Made of His Actions.*

1. THE *Harden'd Obstinacy* of the *Jews* Produc'd so many Other Exorbitances, In them, that One may Wonder at the Patience of Our Blessed Saviour; that It was not quite Worn out, and Tired: One, of the Most Considerable,

ble, was, that They Ever Judg'd ill of His Person, The Words He Spake, and the *Wonderful Works* He Wrought among them; A Manifest Proof of the Poison that Lay Concealed In their Hearts, which, By Little and Little, Stifled what Remained of Common Honesty within them: For Right Reason is Naturally Inclin'd to Judge of Things According as they Appear; But what? Ever, Appear'd, *of Evil*, In the *Immaculate Jesus? Malice*, Therefore, must Have Strangely Darkened the *Natural Light*, within them, which Ever Judges Charitably, and The Best that Matters will Allow, Unless it be Impos'd upon By a False and Malicious Medium: But, as to the Least Colour of Evil; was *That* Ever found In the Conduct of Our Blessed Saviour? In Vindication of *This* it was That He Expostulated with Such Assurance and Convincing Boldness, Saying * *Which of you Convinceth me of Sin?* Then, they were not Only Prov'd uncapable to Lay the Least Shadow of it to His Charge, But Even to Accuse Him of it, However Heightened their Malice was against Him, So that they were Struck Dumb, not Knowing what to Answer.

* St. John 8. 46.

II. When they Charg'd it Upon Him, as A Crime, that He *Heal'd The Sick upon The Sabbath Day*, Confounded them, after Such a Manner, That they Dar'd not to Reproach Him with it any More: They Censur'd Him for Calling *Almighty God*, His Father; But He Made it So Demonstrably Apparent, By the Works He did, that He was, In Truth, the Son of God, that they Had not, In their Malice, a Word to Answer In Reply: When *Annas*, The High Priest, Requir'd of Him

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an Account of His Doctrine, The Blessed Jesus Referr'd the Matter to Those who Heard Him Preach it to the Open World, Although He Knew *The Generation*, to whom He Publish'd it, were his Embitter'd Enemies; And when the *Jews* could not Impeach Him, with any Crime, before *Caiphas*, which did not prove a Manifest *False-Witnessing*, They Resolv'd to Crush Him by Clamorous Obloquy and Seditious Noise.

Those who Entertain'd the most Advantageous Sentiments, of the *Blessed Jesus*, Look'd on Him as no More than *A Holy Prophet*; Others, Determined Concerning Him, Every One According to his Humour, and Particular Inclinations, towards Him: If He was Seen In Company with Loose and Sinful Men, Although the Drift of his Conversation, among Such Creatures, was, Ever, to Set Before them, an Example of Piety and Holiness, and He Only Sought their Salvation; He pass'd for One who Lov'd to be Feasting, and Indulge *Sensual Appetite* among them: Some Said that His Doctrine was New According to the Custom of This Corrupt, Wicked World, which Censures Every Thing with Novelty, which Contradicts its Old Fashionable Errors, and Ancient Irregularities. Others, when they Saw Him follow'd by a Great Crowd of People, Inclin'd to Hear his Word, and See His Miracles, Accused Him of Being *Seditious*, and A Disturber of the Publick Peace: Many Determin'd that He Ought not to Teach, In Publick, but Privately, and In Houses, To Avoid Sedition and the Concourse of the People.

Behold

Behold what the World is; It is Still, at this Very Day, The Same as it was then: It Approves of the Throngings of People, In *Profane Assemblies*, and In Dangerous, Theatrical Performances; But Condemns full Audiences In THE CHURCH, at *The Word of God*, *at the Sacraments*, *and the Most Holy Ceremonies*: We need not Wonder at it; It Esteems *That* which Sooths and Entertains its Vices, and Condemns *that* which would destroy Them.

In A Word, They Came to Such a High Degree of Wickedness and Malice, that when They were not able to Deny the Miracles of Our Blessed Saviour, They Imputed them to *Some Secret Correspondence with the Devil*; And *Thus*, they Endeavour'd to make *The Blessed Author of So many Wonderful Works*, THAT DECEIVER, whose Suggestions and *Malicious Will* they Followed In All Things.

This Contradiction was Much More Sensible and Pungent to the *Blessed Jesus*, than it Could Have been to Any Common Man. III.

For, First, He, of whom the World Judges Wrongfully, does not always Know it: And He is Oftentimes Impos'd upon, and Deceived By the Dissimulation of Those who Despise, or Hate Him, whilst they, at the Same Time, Pretend to Honour and to Love him; But, as to Our Blessed Saviour, He Saw Into the Bottom of Their Hearts; He Discovered the Most Secret Thoughts of His Enemies; The Designs they Had to Ruin Him; And, That which was more Piercing to Him Than his Own, proper Injuries, He Saw The Obstacles They would throw In his way, to prevent All Those Blessings He Intended for Them:

For As *True Love*, Feels the most Lively Sentiments of whatever Can Interpose to Hurt or Offer any Violence to the Object of Our Hearts; And that these Bitter Judgments fell down upon Those who *Blasphemed the Son of God*, The Tenderness He had for them, and His Passion for their Salvation, made Him Infinitely Sensible of the Destruction They Brought upon Themselves.

In the Next Place, The *Great Ones of The World*, altho' they may be More Expos'd to the Publick View and Censure; yet are they Generally Speaking, Spar'd In the World's Reflections; Because They hold *Power* in their Hands, and Men Seek Shelter and Protection from Them, and are Afraid of their Displeasure: He that Despises them, In his Heart, oftentimes fawns upon, and flatters them, in their Presence; And sometimes, complements them upon those very Extravagances for which He Secretly despises them: Each One, at Least, Dissembles the ill Opinion he has of 'em, either out of Respect to their Quality, or for Fear of their Power: But *the Holy Jesus*, for the Example and Comfort of his Servants, who ought to Imitate Him, In this Point and Article of Suffering, Condescended to Submit himself to, and Undergo the *Unjust* Censures, and *Malicious* Reflections of the World, with All those Aggravating Circumstances, which could be supposed to Augment and Increase his Anguish, and Resentment for them; And He Bore the most provoking of their Affrontive Language, without any *Abatement*, or Restriction, which they Construd to his Greatest Disadvantage.

In short, Mankind, Generally find, In their Integrity, A Secret Comfort and Support against

gainst the Malicious Censures and Aspersions of the World, at the same time that, by their Infirmities and Natural Imperfections, they give some Occasion for the Ill they meet with: But, Besides that the most Punctilious Thoughts and Intentions of the Blessed Jesus, were, always, *Pure* and *Immaculate*, his Works were so Innocent and Irreproveable, that Had He Been Capable of Any Evil Purpose, the most Nice and Severe Scrupulosity, could never, possibly, have discover'd the Least Appearance of it, In his Outward Conduct and Behaviour, it was so Sanctious, so Regular, and Quadrate: And yet, we see, every Day we Live, that a Wicked Disposition, can never conceal its Deformity Long; But, some Time or other, *the Leaven* will Appear and Issue out of it.

We may Easily Observe In many Places In the *Psalms*, how very Grievous and Afflicting, these False Judgments and Censures, of theirs, were to the *Blessed Jesus*, when he Appealed to His Father, by the Mouth of *David*, in these Words, † *Judge me, O God, according to my Righteousness, and Deliver me from an Ungodly Nation.* * *Judge me, O Lord, for I have walked Innocently, ——— Prove me; Examine me; Try my Reins and my Heart; For I have Thy Mercy ever before mine Eyes; and I have Pleasure In Thy Truth:* He complains also, In the Gospel, that the *Jews* Gave A wrong Interpretation to All He did; And He told them Plainly to their Faces, that * *They Ought not to Judge, Least They should be Judged:* And by One of His Apostles, that † *He that hath shewed no Mercy, shall be judged without Mercy.*

† Ps. 43. 1.

* Ps. 26. 1, 2, 3.

* St. Mat. 7. 1.

† St. Jam. 2. 13.

If they who are so Ready to Censure and Condemn others, would Consider the Hurt They do IV.

do Themselves, and the Punishments they draw upon their own Heads, doubtless They would be more Sparing and Reserv'd In their *Censoriousness* and *Reflexions*; For whether they Censure the Good Actions of their Neighbour *with Severity*, or that They Condemn his Infirmities without Charity or Mercy; They May be Assured, that The very same Judgment Waits and Attends Themselves: But, If They Come to Censure *Wickedly* and *Unjustly*, what is Good, Let Them Hear *The Sentence* of the Apostle, † *Who art Thou that Judgest Another Man's Servant?* * *For wherein Thou Judgest Another, Thou Condemnest Thy Self; For Thou that Judgest, Doest The Same Things:* Or, at Least, as St. *Chrysostom* Adds, in his Exposition upon this Passage, *You Only Judge Ill of the Actions of your Brother, Because you feel the same Inclinations in your Self, which you think you see In Him.*

† Rom. 14. 4.
* ch. 2. 1.

When the Impatient Man, for Example, sees Another Bearing Any Injury with a *Passive Meekness*, He judges of it by Himself, and presently Determines, that this is not the Result of the Grace of *Patience*, But a pure Counterfeit and Dissimulation: The *Impious and Incurious Prostitute*, when he has the Example of A Devout Soul, Addicted to Prayer, and Constant in his Devotions, He Censures Him as *An Hypocrite*, Because His Own Supineness in the Affairs of Religion, Suggest to Him, that He would not take so much Pains in the *Holy Way*, but for some *By*-End or other: The Wicked Condemn All the Good Works they see in Righteous and Good Men, Attributing them to Hatred, Choler, Baseness, Pride, Dissimulation, or Any other Vce they Feel Predominant in themselves.

themſelves. For, Cenſorious and Evil Judgments, almoſt always, Proceed from the Biaſs and Propenſities to Evil, which Predominate In the Heart of Theſe Cenſurers and Revilers of Good Men. Experience ſhews us This but too Often: The ſame Good Action which Edifies One Perſon, will Scandalize Another: The moſt neceſſary Duties of *Faſting*, *Prayer*, *Pious Converſation*, and *Entertainments*, Create Different Determinations concerning Them, every Day we Live. And there's no other Reaſon can be Given for it, By ſuch Various and Oppoſite Cenſures upon the ſame Fact, which do not follow the Light or Dictates of their own Rational Intellects, but the Falſe Suggeſtions of their Depraved Hearts and Will; And the more Corrupt and Perverſe that is, the more Unjuſt and Cenſorious their Reflexions are againſt their Neighbour.

If Two Perſons ſee a Bad Action Done, the One ſhall be ſenſibly Touch'd with Compaſſion for it, and ſhall Endeavour to Rectify and Heal it, and to Leſſen it as much as May be, and throw a Veil over it: Whereas the Other ſhall take Pains to Publiſh it to the World, to make the moſt on't, and Expoſe it to the utmoſt Cenſure and Puniſhment that the Crime it ſelf will Bear: Thus the very Same Fact will Excite Mercy and Charity from the One, and Malice and Vengeance in the other.

It is True, therefore, according to St. *Paul*, *That He who judges Evil of Another, Condemns Himſelf*; Becauſe, By this very Practice, He ſhews, that He has, at Leaſt, the Same Root In himſelf, or That Evil which he Condemns In his Brother: And that, if God Almighty did

not Assist Him, with his Grace, He would certainly fall into the same Sinful Courses, of which He thinks Him Guilty whom He Condemns.

Although we must not judge that to be Good that's Manifestly Evil; Because we should *then* Contradict the Determinations of Almighty God; yet, most Certain 'tis, that we Ought always to be so very Cautious, so Reserv'd, and Wary in our Censures, that Self-Love, and the Corruption of Our Hearts, may have no Share in Them; Otherwise, in Censuring Our Neighbour, we shall Condemn Our Selves.

V. When We find Our Selves Addicted and Propense to this Unhappy Failing, We must often Confess in Our Souls, before the Presence of the Just God, that We, Ourselves, are more Wicked than Those we judge; And that, if we don't *Actually* Commit All the Sins that Human Malice is Capable of, it is Entirely owing to the *Preventing Grace of God*; Such Reflexions as These will be Neither False nor Unjust; For it is certain, that we don't find so much Wickedness In Others, But Because we are full of it Our Selves; If, therefore, we Cannot Suspend our Judgments, Let us At Least, be Upon Our Guards to Reform and Bridle Our Tongues; That, *That* Virulence and Malignity Remaining hidden, it may Scandalize no Body.

We must, Also, turn All those Sharp, and Severe Censures against Our Selves, which in the Malice of Our Hearts, we have Utter'd or Conceiv'd against Our Neighbour; We must Acknowledge that Corrupted Root, which did

Produce

Produce them, to be within us; And, therefore, Rather be Induſtrious to find out what Means we can to Mitigate and Excuſe the Infirmities of Our Brother: And if we cannot find a Juſt and Reaſonable Vindication for him, yet we Ought to Own, In the Preſence of God, that we are yet Worſe and Greater Sinners than Our Offending Neighbour; Becauſe we have Reſiſted All the *Lights* and *Graces*, the Divine Goodneſs has Given and Vouchſaf'd to us; And if theſe very Men, whoſe Infirmities we ſee, had been Bleſs'd with the ſame *Divine Gifts and Graces*, with Our Selves; Had They been Senſible of Their Faults, as we are, They would have Amended, and Become Better than We are.

Thoſe who are Obliged, by the Duty of their Charge, to Sentence and Correct Others, Ought, Before They Enter upon Their Publick Duty, to Humble Themſelves, and Condemn Themſelves, *Inwardly*, of Their own Failings and Infirmities, that They may Proceed to Uſe Their Authority in Determining upon Malefactors, Conſtantly, *with the Fear of God, the Righteous Judge*, before their Eyes.

Let Every One of us, in Short, Knit this Notion within us, that They whom God Preſerves from falling into Thoſe Sins to which They are Obnoxious, have Greater Reaſon to Acknowledge the Divine Providence, than thoſe whom God has Graciouſly Forgiven after They have Committed Them; As I am more obliged to A Man who has Prevented me from A Wound, than to Him that Heals the Wound I have Received.

*Enarrat. in Ps. 120. This made * St. *Austin* say, That *The Good God forgives us All Those Sins which we Could have Committed, and which we would have Committed, had He not Prevented us with His Grace; And that One Man Commits no Crime, but what Another would be Guilty of, if he were not Preserv'd from it by* HIM WHO MADE MAN; Therefore the Best Man may, with Justice, Look upon Himself to be as Bad as He who appears to be so; Thank the Gracious God that He has not *Actually* fallen into the same Wickednesses which He sees Others Overtaken in; and Implore the *Divine Mercy* not to Permit him to be Overcome by Them.

VI. From Hence Also, One may Draw this Inference, That the Faithful Servants of God, need not trouble Themselves about the Rash and Inconsiderate Censures of the World; Since They Can no More Avoid Them, than the *Blessed Jesus*, Himself, In His Infinite Holiness, could be Exempted from Them: On the contrary, Let them Rest in this Persuasion, that, from The Time they Commence his Servants, and Engage Themselves *Under His Banner*, The World, who did not spare the Master, in this Point, will not shew more Favour to his Servants. By *the World*, in This Place, I mean *All Those*, who, in what Degree or Station soever they are, have no Taste or Rellish of Eternal Truths; And are Entirely Inexperienc'd in Vertue and Religion; Such, as are not Only The Men of the World; But also Ecclesiasticks, and Religious, who forget the *Perfection of their State*; It's True, that They who *first* Enter into God's Service, are Generally Extremely Sensible of *False Judgments* pass'd upon them; But when

when They are More Advanc'd, they will Undergo and Endure Them, without much Concern or Pain.

Let them, nevertheless, Remember what they Owe to Almighty God, thereby to Encourage Themselves to be Faithful to Him, and Constantly to follow his Steps In the Path He has set before them; Let them Consider, that if the World Censures hardly of Good and Vertuous Men, it is not upon the Account of Any Hatred Or Aversion it Bears to Evil; But, Only, out of a Desire it has to *Brow-Beat* and *Discredit Vertue:* For the World Practices and Abetts Vice, Although *'tis Conscious of the Guilt of it*; And, that it may the more freely take its Swing in the World, it Vindicates and Maintains it; It Approves, it Recommends, and Extols, and Cloaths, and Varnishes it, under the Mask of Vertue: It Calls Purity, Hypocrisy; Zeal, Passion; and Justice, Severity; and so of All the Rest; to the End that Making Vertue Pass for Vice, it may Lose the *Weight* and *Esteem* it has among Men; And that they may be no more Ashamed to be *Profligate* and *Vicious*.

† *If you Had been of the World*, said our Blessed Saviour to His Apostles, *The World would have Loved his Own*; *But the World Hates you, Because ye are not of the World, and Because I have Chosen you, and Drawn you out of the World:* If Vertuous Men were, in Truth, Bad, and such as The World Censures them to be, Doubtless, it would Praise them; As it Harangues the Revengeful upon their Courage; The Proud and Haughty, upon the *Punctilio's of Honour*; The Prodigal, upon the Article of *Liberality*; And, it

† St. John 15. 19.

it would be Favourable to them In Commendation of those Vices it Attributes to them by its false Judgments: But, as The World knows that the Conduct of the Just Condemns its Irregularities, It Hates Them; And Persecutes Them, as Unjustifiable and Wicked; Either that It may Draw Them off, from their Righteousness to Its Interest and Party; Or, at Least, to Weaken Them so by Scandal, and Crying Them Down, that They may be, no more, in a Condition to Prejudice or Hurt it.

But, as In Other Matters we value not the Opinion of the Ignorant; In the same Manner, as to what Relates to Religion and Vertue, we must have no Consideration, nor pay any Regard to the Censures of Those who don't know what it is, and who are Familiar and Acquainted with nothing but Sin and Vice.

I don't say This, that Those that Serve God Truly, should look upon Every Body else as A Criminal, under the Notion of Maintaining what is Right and Good; But that They May Discover *The Artifice of the Devil*, who is perpetually Endeavouring to shake Their Constancy, by Human Judgments: Let Them Surmount this Obstacle by their Patience; Let Them *Pray* for Those who *Persecute them*, by Persecuting Vertue; And Let them take these Words of St. *Paul*, for the Rule to Guide them by, where he says, * *With me It is a very small Thing that I should be judged of you; or By Any Man's Judgment whatsoever; yea, I judge not my own self; For, Altho' I do not find my self Guilty In Any Thing; yet I am not Hereby justified; For He that judges me is* THE LORD.

* 1 Cor. 4. 3, 4.

Upon

Upon which Three very Useful Instructions may be Given: The first is, not to Regulate Our Conduct by *mere Human Judgments*, either in Good, or Evil; For, as Men are Weak and Inconstant, They Often Condemn and Approve without Reason, and Rather Out of Fancy, or Out of Passion, than Out of any Insight of Truth: Therefore their Approbation or Evil Censure, Ought not to be Regarded by us, as any sufficient Reason for Our Choice; Besides that, by making One's self A Slave to the Dictates of the Publick, it would be Impossible to please *All the World*, since Every Individual has his particular Biass, and BENT OF THOUGHT, and, Let A Man do what He will, or Can, He will always have the Uneasiness to displease One Part or other. VII.

The Second Advice is, Not to trust Entirely to Our Own *Light* and *Wisdom*, In what Relates to Ourselves; In which Case we are Generally Blinded by *Self-Love!* Let us have A *Good Intention*, and The *Fear of God*; and then Act and Guide Ourselves by the Advice and Council of some *Sage* and *Wise Person*, when 'tis Necessary, In what shall Appear to be Best, and most Agreeable to Almighty God: For, we have such Pressing Obligations to seek to Please Him, and to Labour for our Salvation; And we are so Miserable Besides, that We Ought Not to Flatter Ourselves, as if God were Pleas'd with us, or that we are justified Before Him; For This would be to Attribute to Our Selves A Determination that Belongs Only Unto Him, and to put Our Selves In Danger of Forfeiting Our Humility.

It's

It's true, that it is A Common Temptation to Good and Vertuous Persons, to desire to know Themselves so, as to be able to Determine, with Certainty and Assurance, about the State and Condition of their Souls: But Almighty God, who Loves us so Tenderly, had not hid This Secret from us, if it had been for Our Advantage to be Let into it: Our Business, therefore, is to Use Our Utmost Endeavours to serve God the Best we Can, and as much as it is possible for us to do, without prying into Those Secrets the *Divine Wisdom* Thinks fit to Hide from us; And, to Believe That, Let us be ever so Good, we can never Come up to the Ballance and Obligation of Our Duty; And, that we can Never Determine upon Our Selves, with more Sincerity and Justice, and perfect Truth, then when we are most Severe in Our Judgments upon Our Selves.

The Third Article, of Instruction, is, that He who is Desirous to preserve Tranquillity of Mind, Among the Censures of the World, must Raise his Thoughts up to God; And Consider that, as He is Govern'd by a Wisdom that sees every Thing, and Weighs All in *The Ballance of the Sanctuary*, we can never Loose Any Thing that is *Our Due*; That He, who judges us, strengthens and Augments in us, by His Grace, whatever Little Spark *of Good* He finds within us; That, by His Bounty, He supplies whatever is wanting in us; *Quickens our Languishing and Supine Dispositions*, Illuminates Our Understanding, Giving us an Insight into the Deformity of Sin, that we may flee from it; And that He of His Mercy does forgive it when we Return with a True Faith, and A Sincere Repentance to Him.

A

A

Divine Contemplation,

Upon the Unjust Judgments They Pass'd upon Him.

O Judge Infinitely Wise! Who Penetrateſt The Depth of Hearts; from Whom Nothing is Hid; And whoſe Eyes are ever Open Upon the Evil and upon the Good! Thou ſeeſt my Inner Parts, and whatever, in me, is Diſpleaſing to Thy Purity; Thou Knoweſt how far I am Indebted to Thee; And how Ill I have Diſcharg'd the Obligations I am under to thy Service! Whither ſhall I fly to be Secure from Thy Judgments? * *If I Climb up into Heaven, Thou art there! If I go down into Hell, Thou art there alſo!* And Thou wouldſt ſee me, were I hidden in the Center of the Earth: Why would I ſhun thy Light O my God! It's more Advantageous to me, to be Seen, and to be Known by Thee, than to Hide my Self from Thine Eyes, Suppoſing I could do it: For whilſt I'm Hid from Thee, I muſt Remain in my Miſery, And Thou ever Regardeſt me with Mercy. I.

* Pſalm 139. 8.

'Tis True, I can only find, in my Self, Reaſons to be Afraid of Thee; And to Fly from Thee;

Thee; But, O whither shall I Fly and not find Thee Present! And if I should not find Thee, who shall Cure me of my Evils! Cast Thine Eyes upon me, Therefore, O my God! O my Judge! Behold the Corruption of my Heart! The Contrivance of mine Enemies to Separate me from Thee! My Weakness and Incapacity to Resist Them! My Defiance of my Just God! My Obstinacy to offend Him, and my Negligence to Serve Him.

Judge me, O Lord, according to my Righteousness, and According to my Innocence, Which is the Effect of *Thy Labour*, and the Fruit of THY MERITS: Judge me According to the *Eternal Love* Thou Bearest to me! Judge me According to That Endearing Flame within Thy Self; For I have nothing within me but what is An Argument Against me: And if Thou wouldst have Any Thing of Good to be found in Me, which may Defend Me against Thy Justice, Communicate *The Merits* of THY BLOOD and SUFFERINGS unto me! Bestow Thine Innocence, and Thy Holiness upon me! Read in thy Self, The Reasons which are my *Justification*; And, from thence, Pronounce The Sentence upon my Soul: Consider, O Lord, That Inclination to Sin, That Opposition to Vertue, That Root of *All Evil*, that is Radicated in the very Center of my Heart; Exert Thy Justice upon *That*; Pluck it up without Mercy, And Plant, in the Room of it, those Wholesome Stocks, from whence only *Good Fruits* proceed.

II. When I Enter into my Self, O Divine Jesus! And find my Self so full of Malignity and Corruption, I am Afraid to see Thee! And find my Self

Self oblig'd to say to Thee with Holy *David*, Lord, † *Turn Away Thine Eyes from my Sin:* But when I Consider that Thou Alone Canst Heal me; I fear Least Thou shouldst not vouchsafe to Regard me, and I beseech Thee with the same Prophet, * *Create in me A Clean Heart, O my God, and All the Rest will be Purified.* Remember, that Thou hast said sometime to *Noah*, That § *The Imagination of Man's Heart is Evil from his Youth:* O Thou Source and Fountain of *All Good!* Who hast no Less Power, to Restore and Redress what is fallen, than to Create Beings out of Nothing, Create in me, A New Spirit, which may Repair the Decay and Ruins of my Soul, and which may Restore me *the Goods* that I have Lost.

† Psalm 51. 9.

* Ibid v. 10.

§ Gen. 8. 21.

Thou hast Lived Amongst Men; Thou hast Endeavoured to Heal their Sores; Thou hast shew'd them, in thy Self, the Model of All Perfection; Thou hast forgot Nothing to Instruct them, and to Enlighten them: But Thou hast found them so Corrupted, and so full of Mortal Passion, which flow'd from their Hearts, that they have not only Rejected Thy Blessings, But Even Censur'd and Condemn'd THY TRUTHS, as if they had been Like the Offspring of Their Own Corruption.

O Son of the Living God! How I Adore That Meekness, and the Patience with which Thou hast Born so Great Wickedness in the Hearts of Men! I cannot but Think, that I am, in some Sense, more oblig'd to Thee, for Condescending to Undergo such Unjust Judgments, than Even for thine Amazing Resignation of thy Self to die for me; For the Rage and Fury with which Thine Enemies were Raving, might well

Hurry

Hurry them on to make Thee Endure The Death Thou didſt Deſire; But They Could not find, Either in thy Words, or in Any Thing thou didſt, Any Grounds to Judge Ill of Thee; And Nothing But their own Malice could provoke Them to it.

III. How Great is thy Goodneſs, to Suffer Such an Injuſtice! But, O Divine Jeſus! The World judges Thee to this very Day, According to Themſelves; As Men ſeldom Meſs with their Friends, without Committing ſome Exceſs; They can't imagine, that Thou ſhouldſt debaſe thy Self ſo far, as to Eat with Sinners, with no other View, but to Save them: Since the Publick World are tranſacting under A Correſpondence with the Devil, by the Continual Acts of Obedience they are Always paying him, They Think it is by His Aſſiſtance that Thou Workeſt ſuch Miracles as Thou doeſt! What is it They Behold in Thee to poſſeſs Them with ſuch Notions? Did They Ever Hear Thee Speak an Unprofitable Word? Did They Ever See the Leaſt Indiſcretion in Thy Conduct?

They have met with Nothing, But what's Divine in Thy Doctrine; Nothing, But what is Real in Thy Miracles; Nothing, but what is Edifying in Thy Life! Thou haſt never ſought after the World's Riches, nor Its Honours; And Thou haſt Conſtantly Refuſed Them, when It has offer'd Them Unto Thee; Why, then, Does it Judge ſo Ill of Thee, O my Redeemer! Unleſs it be that Thou wouldſt be Condemned for my Sake! Thy Nails, Thy Thorns, Thy Croſs, have changed Thieves and Robbers into Saints: Thy Wounds have Cured Thoſe of thine Executioners; And thy Torments have made

made thy Tormentors to Relent; But those Unjust Judgments which were pass'd upon Thee, have Only Serv'd to Harden those Wicked Judges, and to Infatuate and Blind Them against *Thy Light* and *Thy Mercy!* Be Thou Bless'd, for Ever, O my God, who hast willingly undergone so great Contradiction, to be My Comfort, when I meet with Any Thing of that Nature; And to Teach me what I am to Expect from the Malice of Wicked Men.

Behold me, here, Before Thy *Mercy-Seat*, O my Saviour! Hear The Complaints, and Sobbings of my Heart! Thou sayest, that *All Our Inclinations are Bent to Evil*; And I Behold what thou hast said, verified In the Practice of the Sons of *Adam*, Every Day I Live; They cannot Look upon the very Blessings Thou Bestowest upon Them, but with an Evil Eye; I Betake my Self to Thee, O Infinite Bounty! Because I cannot fly from My Self, but By Thee! I feel the same Irregularity in My Self; I Look upon That as GOOD which thou Forbiddest me; That which Leads me to Death, makes the Sweetness of My Life; And I seek my Pleasure, and for my Consolation, In that which Separates me from thy Enjoyment. IV.

Thy Law is Burthensome unto me, and Thy Conversation Tedious; I am always Indisposed to forgive my Brother, But with all the Easiness In the World I offend my God! 'Tis Ungrateful to me, to spend my Time in Thy Service; But Easy, and Refreshing to let it fleet away in Vanity and Trespass; I prefer the Sensual Pleasures of the Flesh to the Pure and Innocent Delights of the Mind: And, what

Ought to Confound me yet more, tho' I believe the Contrary, by the Faith Thou preserveſt in my Heart, I do not ceaſe to follow the Dictates of my Corrupt Nature, which ever Draggs me Down to Grovel in the Earth.

When wilt Thou Deliver me from my Self, O my God! What is there in my Heart that does not Incline to Evil! The very Mercies Thou Expreſteſt Towards me, Become, oftentimes, the Original and Occaſion, in me, of A Falſe and Miſchievous Conſtruction: Thus, out of A Senſe of Thy Merciful Compaſſion, I Abandon, and give my Self A Greater Liberty to Sin; under A View of Thy *Patience* and *Forbearance* towards me, I Perſevere in my Wickedneſs and Folly; When I Conſider Thy Generoſity and Gracious Goodneſs, I conclude preſently, that I ſhall eaſily do enough to Save my Soul, and ſatisfie Thee well enough, and Gratifie my Sinful Appetites at the ſame Time; and that Thy Wrath will be as ſoon Appeas'd, as my Own Conſcience is Lull'd and laid Aſleep. Thus I am Wicked, Becauſe Thou art Good; And Tardy to Reform my Sinful Life, Becauſe Thou art Merciful and Patient to Bear with me: I Perſwade my Self, that I can Blend and Quadrate the Divine Food which Thou Beſtoweſt on me for the Support of my Soul, with the Impure Corruption into which I Sink, Becauſe thy Juſtice will ſpare, and I ſhall be Juſtified in my Filth: In ſhort, I find nothing but Miſconſtruction, and falſe Judgment within me! What will Become of Me, Moſt Merciful Redeemer! If *That Forbearing Goodneſs*, which has Born yet with me, in mine Iniquities, does not ſtill forbear me till my Wounds are Healed!

Thou

Thou seest, O My God! How that All Over Sinful and Infirm as I am, I have no Sense of the Wretchedness of my Condition; And how I value my Self upon the Little Matter of Good, I do, or indeed, Desire, Although I can neither do A Good Work, nor Think A Good Thought, but what Proceeds from Thee: I Endeavour to Pass among Mankind for A Better Man than in Truth I am; And I cannot Bear that the World should Reflect on me to my Disadvantage; although 'tis Impossible for Man to Imagine me to be such A Sinful Creature as Thou seest me to be! Lord! Heal me, by thy Grace! O Cure me of These Dangerous and Inward Sores! Incline me to keep up my Eye-Lids, and Lift up My Soul Towards Thee! Enlighten mine Eyes with the Glory of Thy Truth, that They may Behold those Blessings, *In Thee*, which I find there; and that I may Behold that Corruption in my Self, that Thou Abhorrest. V.

Suffer me not, for the Future, to Impose upon my Self, by false Imaginations; Give me, that I may Behold the Vanities of the World, In their True Light; That I may see Them as They Are; And, Give me A true Sense of my Own Sinfulness and Corruption, that I may Despise, that I may Condemn, that I may Abhor my Self; And that I may Entertain such *Awful Thoughts* of Thee as I Ought; That I may Honour and Reverence thy Holy Name, That I may Fear Thee, That I may Adore, That I may Desire Thee, That I may Love Thee, As My Lord, My Judge, My Father, my *Supreme Good!* Lord! Rectifie All the Faculties and Powers of mySoul! Since Thou hast Created Them for thy Ser-

vice; Cleanse and Purify my Heart, since Thou wouldst have me to make That A Present to Thee; O change *This Den of Thieves*, into A *House of Prayer!* And This Abyss of Miseries, into *An Habitation for thy Holy Spirit.*

VI. One of The most fatal Delusions that Results from my Pride, is, to Lay too great a Stress upon the Opinion of the World; Thou seest, O Lord, How far this Vanity Extends itself, and Prevails; and How obnoxious I am to it: What Good, or Indeed, what Hurt, Can the Vogue of the World do me? I am, in Truth, The very Creature that Thou Judgest me to be, And Can Neither Be the Better Man, by the Value or Applauses of the Publick, nor One Whit the Worse for their Contempt or Censure: There is no Soul upon Earth Malicious Enough to Conceive me so Wicked, But I can Prove the Truth of his Idea's by the Wickedness of my Practise. Were All The Creatures upon Earth to be Collected into One Body, to Condemn me for the Wickedness I have Committed Against Thy Majesty; All Their Censures would not Come up to the Ballance of Mine Iniquities, and the Aggravation of my Guilt; For My Sins are Greater, and much more Innumerable, than even Imagination it Self can Reach or Comprehend.

Wherefore then, do I complain, O Thou *Ever-Equitable*, and *Righteous Judge!* I Bemoan my Self Because The World Censures and finds Fault with me; In every Thing I do, my Eyes are still fix'd upon the Approbation of Mankind, to Consider what They will think on't; I direct my Steps, and measure All my Actions, and Weigh my very Words in the Ballance of Men's Opinions;

Opinions; And I would fain Recollect and Obtain the Universal Approbation and Vogue in my own Favour: But, How Vain, Alas! is this Attempt! And how far does it Distance me from Thee; O My God! How does it Weaken and Indispose my Soul for the Business of my Devotions! It takes it up with a Thousand Useless Cares; It gives me a Thousand Vexations and Uneasinesses; And fills me with an Ocean of Distracting Thoughts, that are an Abomination to thy Goodness, and the Purity of thy Nature.

There is yet Greater Vanity and Folly in the Soothings of my Heart, and Priding my Self, upon the Conceit of having perform'd or said Any Thing that has the Face of a Good Action in it. When I Reflect how the World is pleas'd with me and my Conversation; when I am under an Extreme Impatience to be satisfied what They Think of Me; Not to Reform, and Rectifie what I have done Amiss; But to Gratifie my Humour: Happy is the Soul that's so Pure, and Disengag'd, as to have none of these Vanities in its View!

VII. Draw All my Thoughts to Thee! O Saviour of my Soul! All my Imaginations and Projects to thy Self. Take Pity on This Divided Heart, It is no hard Matter to do what is Pleasing in thy Sight; for Thou art Contented with a Little, and Thy Great Goodness Condescends to my Weakness: Thou hast Inform'd me of Thy Will and Pleasure, in Respect to Those Things that Concern my Salvation, Least I should wander out of the Way of Life! But as for the Things of less Importance, and where it is not so Absolutely Necessary that thy Mind should be

be so manifestly Express'd, There Thou art Content with the Sincerity and Uprightness of my Inclinations, tho' they should not be so exactly Conformable and Quadrant to Thine own.

When Thou seest me Ready to Fall, Thou supportest me; If *I do Fall*, Thou stretchest out Thine Hand to Raise me up again: And How Wicked soever I may be, I cannot be so great a Sinner, but Thy Gracious Goodness will find out some Arguments to move Thee to do me Good: I am Always sure that I may satisfie Thy Goodness, O my God, whenever I go About it! But How can I satisfie the World, who cannot Penetrate into the Dispositions of My Heart; who, for the most Part, Judge of me by Themselves; And, without Examining Any Thing, Approve or Condemn According to their Fancy? One Determines me to Suffer, Another Prompts me to Revenge; This Man thinks me to be Humble, The Other Represents me as A Hypocrite: In the Opinion of some I pass for A Coward; And others shall Represent me as A Prudent Man; But tho' I should content them All, what Advantage would it be to me for the Salvation of my Soul?

VIII. Infinite Thanks be Render'd to Thee, O My Creator, and Divine Saviour! That Thy Goodness has Deliver'd me from All These Cares, and Reduc'd All my Thoughts and Obligations to this Single One, even to Love Thee, and to Serve Thee with All My Heart: If Thou hadst obliged me to offend no Body, and to Humour every Body, it had been Impossible for me to have Answer'd thy Commands: † *Assemble therefore the Outcasts of Israel*; Recollect the

† *Psal.* 147. 2.

Multiplicity

Multiplicity of my Desires into thy Self Alone; Root out of my Heart, the Value of All Worldly Censures, and Reflections, whether They be Good or Evil! Take from me All manner of Concern to Please and Humour A Vain World, which Thou, Thy Self, Couldst never Satisfie or Give Content to; And, let me no Longer Hearken to the Judgments of One who has Judg'd so *Unjustly* and so *Wrongfully of Thee!* All that I Desire is, that I may but Please Thee, O my God. 'Tis to Thee I offer my *All*, my very *Being!* Establish Thy Divine Presence in my Heart! Raise Thou up Mind unto Thee! That, being Disengag'd of whatever cannot fill me with thy Love, I may Live to Thee! Make Thee the Only Subject of my Soul; The Only Object of my Thoughts: That I may be *Ever* Breathing, and Panting after Thee; That I may rest in Thee, O My Jesus! My Just Judge! My Faithful Friend! And my most Loving and Amiable *Redeemer!*

☞ O Mother of God! Full of Grace, Replenish'd with Our Lord, who is Ever with Thee, How Rich and Precious were you, In the Eyes of *Him*, who had Wrought such Wonders In you! But how Ignorant was the World of your *Exaltation*; I Conjure you, by *Those Chains of Pure Love*, which have United you so Intimately to your God, your Lord, your Spouse, your Son, and your Treasure! Sollicit for me to Obtain the Grace I Beg of you! Inspire my Heart that it may Remain United to Him, by A Sincere Intention, and By Pure Love! So that No Created Being, may be Ever Able to Separate me from Him!

O Cælestial Court! So Acceptable to YOUR KING, and YOUR JUDGE! And who were, once, formerly Condemned, or Unknown to *The World*, Forget not, Among the Treasures you Possess In THAT BLESSED REGION, Him, who is Groaning after them In his Exile State! That, Being wholly taken up with the Contemplation of your Bliss, He may not be Drawn Away by the False Allurements of This Sinful World, *Amen*.

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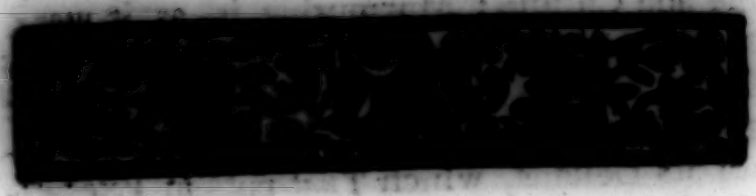

THE Twenty first Instance OF THE SUFFERINGS OF Our Blessed Saviour.

CHAP. XXI.

In The Murmurings of Men Against Him.

FROM False and Unjust Judgments, Murmuring Generally Arises, which, to Pious and Good Men, is A Pain, by So much the more Grievous, as they Cannot, by Any Means, Reconcile or Accustom Themselves to it; Whereas, Other I.

Other Pains are Mitigated and Soften'd by Time and Custom: Murmuring is, as it were, The Executioner of Evil Judgments; For A Wicked Heart, Cannot do much Hurt, if it does not Intrust its Tongue with the Execution of its Designs, which *That* puts in Execution, Afterwards, not Only by Discovering what was Hidden There, But Also by Putting Such A Gloss upon it, as to make it Pass for *Justice*: As all Mankind, Almost, are Subject to This Vice, more or Less, we must not Flatter Our Selves So as to Imagine we Can Escape, or be Exempted from being Murmur'd at, or Evil Spoken of; Since The Blessed Jesus Himself was not Free from it; And that All The *Sanctity of his Person*, and All The Innocency of his Life could not Guard him from it.

He Suffer'd *This Persecution*, with the Same Patience that He Underwent All The Rest: They Murmur'd, against Him, without Any Mercy or Reserve; In The Streets; In The Publick Meetings; In Their Houses; In The Synagogues, In The *Jewish* Sanhedrim Among The Doctors, and Professors of The Law; and The Chief of The Nation; And He Seldom Eat A Morsel, or Appear'd In Conversation, or Publick Assembly, but he was Reviled, and his Disciples Vilify'd with Reproach and Calumny: If any One Presum'd to Take His Part, or Speak A Word, In his Vindication, He Only Rais'd A Greater Dust, and Enrag'd His Enemies the More, whose Hatred Increas'd Proportionably to the Opposition They Met Withal.

They Said, that *A Sinner Could not Work Miracles*; And, that This Person was In Truth,

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A Sinner, *Who did not Observe The Sabbath Day!* The Priests Assur'd them That He was Despised by All People, of any Fashion; and That He was Only Follow'd by The Mob: The Doctors Murmur'd Because He Call'd Himself THE SON OF GOD; The *Pharisees*, who Thought Themselves Saints, made Him to Pass for an Impostor, who had to do with *The Devil*; They Could not So much as Bear it, that He should Converse with Sinners: They Laugh'd at his Disciples, Because They were, almost All of 'em, Very Poor, and of no Extraction; They made A Thousand Reflections upon Those who Listen'd to His Doctrine; And all These Outrages Fell upon The Blessed Jesus: The Malice of The *Jews*, Joyn'd to an Infinite Addition of the most Odious and False Circumstances, which are Commonly Annex'd to Such Sort of Discourses, Caused All Those Great, and Heavy Clamours, and So Sensible An Affliction to the Blessed Jesus, that we Owe Him not much Less Acknowledgement, That He did not Give Over His Gracious Purpose of Redeeming us, upon Their Provoking and most Cruel Tongues, than for the Very Work Itself of *Our Redemption*.

It Cannot be Conceived, But by Those who have, In fact, Experienc'd it, how Forcible this Wretched Spirit of *Contradiction* is, to Stagger and Overcome the Will; To Quell and Flag the Inclinations of doing Good, or shewing Any Act of Friendship to Those who are Addicted to This Provoking Temper; And to make One Leave off doing Such Wretches Any Good, Even when One has Begun to Serve Them: Altho' Almighty God, Ever Faith-

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ful In his Promises, Has Punctually Fulfill'd That which He made to *Abraham*, That He would Give to His Posterity A Land full of All Sorts of Plenty; And yet, to Punish the Murmurings of his People, He would only Suffer Two Single Persons, out of All that Innumerable Multitude of People, whom He had Drawn Out of *That Egyptian Captivity*, to Enter Into *The Land of Promise*.

The *Son of God*, being *Become Man*, Suffer'd All These Murmurings, without Omitting to *Do Good* to Those Very Men, who Murmured Against him. And, he Commanded his Disciples to Behave Themselves after the Same Manner, In their Conversation with the World: He Exhorted them to put them Selves Above all Murmuring Reflexions, By Telling them, That * *It is Sufficient for the Disciple to be As His Master; And The Servant as his Lord; And that If they have Called The Master of The House Beelzebub; How much more shall They Call Them of his Houshold?*

* St. Mat. 10. 25.

It is A Great Comfort to The *Faithful* when they are Calumniated, and Reviled, to Consider that, By this very *Persecution*, They Become *The Servants of Him*, who has Set them the Example, by Suffering the Same before 'em: But to Maintain this Honour, and This So Estimable A Privilege, they must be Faithful to Their Master, to Imitate Him in This Point; And to Bear, as he did, the Murmurings of Men! For, This World Being A Place of *Pain* and *Misery*, There is No Flesh Alive, but what is Obnoxious to These among the Common Incidents of Cross and Troubles; And it is Patience Alone that Distinguishes, the *Faithful Servants of God*, from *The Men of the World*: These Last Undergo them with an

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Evil Will, and with An Heart So full of Bitterness and Impatience, that they, Oftentimes Render Themselves more Guilty than the Very Miscreants that Abuse them! But, as for The *True* Servants of God, They Receive These Injurious Insults, which they meet with, with All *Submission* and *Humility*, as A Sort of Expiation of their Sins, A Visitation which they Believe Themselves to have Deserved; Or, if They have not Deserved them, They Bear Them with Joy, Because they are Thought Worthy to *Resemble their Blessed Saviour*, who has No Less Offer'd his Blessings to Those who Would not Receive Them, Than to Those who have Accepted Them with *Gratitude* and *Acknowledgement*.

III. The most Christian, and Efficacious Means, to Confound *Detractors*, is to Instruct Them in Vertue, By Patience, Meekness, and Good Services! There is No Time Less Profitably Spent than *That* which is Taken up in Tying up the Tongues of Men; He who Delights in Murmuring and Reviling, Seeks, not to have any Reason for what he Says, But, to have Always Something to Exercise his *Virulence* upon; And He has Never A Greater Itch to be at his Old Practice than when most Reasons are Produc'd for him to hold his Tongue: He Only Murmured against your *Actions*, Before; And now He will Attack your Reasons; He will Soon Advance as far as to your Intentions, And all that you can Say to him, will Serve only to Furnish New Matter for his Injurious Reproaches.

Silence, Mildness, Perseverance in doing Good, and A Holy, and Discreet Dissimulation,

on, are the Strongest Artillery that any One Can make Use of to Withstand Detraction: For if it Proceeds from Malice, It is Sufficiently Punish'd by the Vexation the malicious Have of not Being Able to Obtain their Ends against an Enemy who does not Defend Himself; If it proceeds from Ignorance, or Vicious Custom it is Soon Stopt by Silence, and does not Last Long.

If there be any Remedy against the Mischief of an Evil Tongue, it must Consist in This, Not to Regulate Our Conduct upon the Talk of the World; Its Rather, not to give Them any Just Occasion to find Fault with it: If we Regulate the Intentions of Our Heart, and The Actions of Our Life, According to The Maxims of the Gospel, we Ought to Concern Our Selves very Little at what People say of us: Experience it Self Teaches us, that there is No Rock more Dangerous, in the Way of Vertue, than to Lay A Stress upon what the World will say of us: And He that subjects Himself to This Consideration, will not Continue Long Faithful to Almighty God; For, there are but Few, who have Strength enough to Resist A Friend, A Superiour, An Equal, and the Torrent of the Publick Vogue: The Fear of Displeasing One Single Man, who Vents, against All Reason and Justice, whatever comes into his Head, has oftentimes more Force to Damp and Discourage us, than our most Essential Duties have to Support us.

Upon this Account, the Blessed Jesus foretold his Disciples, that they should not be free from Bad Tongues; But to Please Him They must stop their Ears; and stick Close to Their Duties,

Duties, without Regarding what was said of 'em! Let Good and Pious Men therefore not suffer Themselves to be mov'd by such Discourses; But Let Them Endeavour to be ABOVE them, by their *Constancy* and *Perseverance* in Good Works.

IV. The Blessed Jesus said, by the Mouth of *David*, † *In My Distress I cried unto the Lord, and He Heard me: Deliver my Soul, O Lord, from Lying Lips, and from a Deceitful Tongue:* He Gives Thanks to God, *His Father*, for that He heard Him against Those who Reviled him; not by stopping their Tongues, but by giving Him Strength to Endure and Support himself under their Unjust Lashes: For this full Victory of the Just, which shall Triumph in the Confusion of Injustice, is Reserved to the *Last Judgment*, where, the Impious, who have wrong'd them here Below, by their Slanderous Revilings, seeing Them Exalted in Glory, shall say, * *These are They whom we sometime had in Derision, we, Fools, Counted their Life Madness, and Their End to be without Honour, How Are They Numbered Among the Children of God, And Their Portion is Among the Saints.*

† Ps. 120. 1, 2.

* Wisd. 5. 3, 4, 5.

The Faithful Servants of God, therefore, ought to persuade themselves that it is Loosing of Time to pretend to Appease the *Censorious Herd*! That this Life is short, And the Best Way would be to undergo Ignominy with Patience, to imitate Our Saviour, and Leave the Rest to Him.

Nevertheless This hinders not, but that One is, sometimes, Oblig'd to Give an Account of One's Conduct, either in Publick or Private; when the Salvation of our Neighbour depends upon

upon it; or, when the Publick Good of the Church, and the Glory and Service of God Require it: But then This must be done with so much Moderation, that in giving just Satisfaction in the Truth we are oblig'd to Relate, we fall into no Passion; and that We Reply not in their own Way, to these Revilers; Otherwise while we Justifie our Selves on the One Side, we should fall into the Guilt of our Accusers on the Other.

But Because we almost Ever Exceed in what Relates to Our Selves, we must moreover follow the Advice of some Prudent Minister of God; And take Care, above All Things, not to be too Severe in our Complaints against Those who have done us Wrong, and not to Exaggerate, and *swell* upon the Injuries we have met with from them; For the more Just Those Complaints may seem to be, They are still the more Dangerous to the Soul; By such warm Expostulations, the Soul Looses the Purity of Patience; it falls into Presumption; it Renders the Reviler worse, instead of Mending him; It weakens the Vigour of Charity; And Assumes to it Self, Part of That Prerogative of *Passing Sentence*, which *Only and Entirely Appertains to God*: Insomuch that if after These Complaints, it comes to Enter Seriously into it Self, it will often find More to Reform There, than in the Tongue of the Revilers, of whom it complains so much: It were much Better, therefore, to Address them to Almighty God, *who sees All*; To desire Him, Alone, to be Witness to what Wrongs we suffer; To open Our Hearts and Represent all Our Greivanees Before Him; And to Remember, That there is, in Silence,

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and Resignation of One's Mind, *A Hidden Treasure of* Spiritual Riches, which it is our Great Concern to find Out: Happy is He who meets with it; and who Enjoys in Private, This Precious Gift, which the *Detracting Wretch* knows nothing of.

Detraction is A Sickness that's INCURABLE: It is in vain, therefore, to Pretend to Heal it; And we must Despise it, if we would preserve the Tranquillity of the Soul; For the Greatest Part of Those who Addict Themselves to This *Odious Vice*, Either do it to Gratify Their Own Invidious and Malicious Natures, or for *mere Mischief's Sake*. Those who villify their Neighbour, only for the mere Pleasure and Itch of the Vice; make little or no Conscience of doing it, whatever Mischief and Vexation they Bring upon Others by it; Not thinking of Any Occasion they have of any Redress or Cure: And their Pleasure so much the more Increases, as They find Those whom They have Injur'd with their Slanders, Gall'd, and in a Passion at what They have said of 'em: And they are so much the more Animated and Excited to go on, in their Wicked and Unjust Reviling, as They find their Opprobrious Slanders make the Greater Impression upon the Innocent.

Upon This Account it is, That the Antient Philosophers and Sages so Prudently advis'd, to look upon Slanderous Reproaches, as the most *Wholesome Counsels and Advices*; and as a Mirrour which Represents Our *Defects and Failings* in it: For that which a Friend would Excuse out of Kindness, or wink at out of Tenderness, or negligently over-look, the Detractor Publishes without Sparing or Reserve; And plainly tells

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us the Vices we ought to Fear; which made St. *Bernard* say, † "*That Vertue would grow* "*Weak, and Loose its Lustre, if it Continu'd with-* "*out Exercise and Trial*; That REVILERS and "PERSECUTORS *are the Men who keep it in Em-* "*ploy, and from the Rust*; And, that *By Suffer-* "*ing their Violences, and Returning them Good for* "*Evil, It becomes more Pure, and of the Brighter* "*Perfection.*

† Lib. de Consid.

But, whether I ought not to complain of this same Saint, I cannot say, for having added, that RELIGIOUS were Subject in some Measure, to This *Murmuring Evil:* Which Vice *In Them,* must needs have been very Pungent to *His Holiness,* Since he could not forbear to give them This Publick Reprimand! God Almighty be Gracious to us, who are under Greater Vows to A Religious Resignation, that this Heavy Reproach may not fall upon us; And That we may Ever have THAT SENTENCE of the Apostle before our Eyes, * *If Any Man among you, seems to be* RELIGIOUS, *and Bridleth not his Tongue, But Deceiveth his own Heart,* THIS MAN'S RELIGION IS VAIN.

* St. Jam. 1. 26.

A Divine

A

Divine Contemplation,

Upon the Murmurings of Men.

I Adore Thee, O Infinite Goodness! O My Lord, and My Happiness! I render Thee A Thousand Thanks for All the Means and Contrivances Thou hast Made Use of, And All the Pains and Miseries Thou hast Endured to Dis-engage me from the Love of Worldly Things: If I were not Blind, How could I Remain One Moment Attach'd and Rivetted to the World, whose Malice is so Great, that it dares presume even to set it Self up in Opposition to Thee, *My Supreme Good!* How can I Live without *Blessing* Thee! Wherefore is there Breath in my Nostrils! Ah! Blessed Lord, Direct me, by Thy Gracious Providence, to A Place where I may Praise and Magnifie thy Adorable Goodness without Interruption! Lead me into The Company of Those *Pure Spirits*, who Constantly *Behold thy Face*; who Prize Thee, Love Thee; Adore Thee; And whose whole Employment it is to Glorify thy Holy Name! But, in the mean Time, 'till Thou shalt Please to Grant me this Favour, Dispose my Heart to An Entire Aversion, and Contempt of All Human

Applauſe; that I may Deſpiſe the Utterings of Every Tongue, that Knows Not How to Praiſe and Honour Thee! Though All Parts of my Body ſhould be Changed into Tongues; And All the *Heavenly Hoſt* ſhould joyn with me, to Glorify Thy Goodneſs, for what Thou haſt done for us, what would This be, in Compariſon of what Thou ART, what is *Thy Due*, And of that *Ineffable Love*, Thou haſt Witneſſed unto us? And yet This Single Tongue, which Thou haſt Given to Every One of us, Employs it Self in Nothing Leſs than in Bleſſing and Praiſing Thee!

Is there Any Thing in Thee, *O Thou Love of my Soul!* Which One Cannot and Ought Not to Praiſe? Why then, ſhould we Refuſe *Our Hoſannah's* to Thee! Is it becauſe *Thou Eateſt with Sinners!* Or, that Thou doſt not Obſerve the *Out-ſide* of *The Sabbath-Day?* Or, is it Becauſe Thou Converſeſt with Poor and Inſignificant Men, Creatures of no Character or Eſteem, Rather than with the Haughty, and the *Rich of This World?* Is it Becauſe the Phariſees Blaſpheme Thee, ſaying, *That Thou art Poſſeſſed with a Devil?* And, that Thou art A *Samaritan?* That Thou haſt done no Good to the World! Becauſe They have found Nothing Praiſe-Worthy in Thee! And Becauſe They have not Experienc'd the Bleſſed Effects of Thy Divine Power? No: Have not They felt Thy *Mercy* and Thy *Sweetneſs?* And were They ſo Blind as to ſee Nothing in Thee but their Own Vices? How can I deſire then, O my God, that the World ſhould ſee in me, That which it did not ſee in thee? And that it ſhould ſpeak Any Thing in my Commendation, which it was

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so Hardened and Infatuate, as not to say in Thine!

Since † *Death and Life are in the Power of the Tongue*, And that the World hath said Nothing of Thee, who art the TRUE LIFE, but the Words of Death, ‖ *Open Thou my Lips O Lord!* ‖ *And my Mouth shall shew forth thy Praise!* I will Acknowledge Thine Infinite Majesty, with All my Heart; I will magnify Thy Name, in Thanksgiving, for All Those Mercies and Blessings which That Ungrateful People did not own in Thee; I will Bless Thee as long as I Live, *O Thou Life of my Soul!* Because those Ingrates Murmured Against Thee for Those very Favours Thou didst Bestow upon them.

† Prov. 18. 21.

‖ Ps. 51. 15.

II. I Adore That Charitable Condescention, O My Redeemer! which Disposed Thee to Converse and Dine with Sinners, to Gain Them to Thee! For, Alas! what would Become of Me, shouldst Thou Only Converse with The Righteous! what Hopes should I have to Obtain The Forgiveness of my Sins, if I Saw none But Saints About Thee? What must Become of my *Wounds*, and my *Infirmities*, if Thou wert not to Enter the Habitations of The *Sick* and *Feeble?* Let the *Pharisees* Blaspheme, and say what they will, *Thou art my Salvation*, my *Mercy*, And my Refuge! The Table of Sinners is No Less Proper for Thee, than That of Angels: And The Flame of Thy Love will be more Manifestly Forceable upon A Matter Less Combustible, and more Difficult to Take Fire! Come, then, and Enter Into my Heart, Thou *God of Love!* Stay There, and Eat with me! And, as Thou Knowest How Thou Shalt be

be Received, and The Little that I Have to Present and Entertain Thee with, Let Thine Own Goodness move Thee to Excuse the Poverty and Emptiness Thou Shalt find There! There is Nothing, but *Poor Indigence*, to be met with There! Nothing But A Cold and Loathsom Habitation! There, Thou Wilt meet with Nothing but Faint and Languishing Desires, Corrupt and Sinful Works, Fit only to Provoke Thee! But yet, Notwithstanding all This, Thou Canst not, O God of my Soul, Dispense with thy Self, from Coming There! Since it is my Earnest Desire Thou Shouldst do So; And Thou, Thy Self, Inspirest me with The Motion to Desire it: Thou Wilt Put All Things, *There*, Into the State Thou wouldst Redress Them in; All That's Valuable will Enter Into it, with Thee, And Thou Wilt Receive Thine Own Perfect Self Therein.

Remember How that, After Thou Hast Said, That * *Thou wouldst Come in, to Those Who Love Thee, and Keep thy Words, and make Thine Abode with Them*; Thou didst not Cease To Take Care of Sinners, to Seek Them Out, to Visit Them, Although They Lov'd Thee not, and did not Know Thee: For, Thou Comest to The Righteous, Because They Love Thee; And Unto Sinners that Thou Mayst Win Them to it! *Quicken*, Then, *Thy Holy Spirit*, In me, *O my God!* Fullfil my Heart with Thy Love! And Repair All The Decays, there, That Thou Findest In it; If The Pharisaick World Murmur at it, and Reflect upon't, *The Angels Will Rejoice*, Therein, and *I'll Bless Thee, for it, for Ever!*

* St. John. 14. 23.

I Laud

I Laud and Bless Thee, from This Moment, O Lord, that Thou wouldst not take Any Other Rest, On The *Sabbath Day*, than what Thou didst find in *Doing Good* to Men: When thy *Divine Love*, *Ever Active*, after it Created the World in Six Days, Rested it self, on the Seventh, This was not that It shou'd Remain, *Dead*, and *Idle*: The *Pharisees*, who knew not The Secret of Thy Love, Murmur'd at The Good Thou didst *Them*: They knew not, O My God! that thy Sabbath is to take Thy Repose, In my Soul; And, that, for this very Reason, Thou hast Ordained that, upon *This Day* in Particular, I should Fix my Thoughts upon no Other Object but on thee alone! But, Let the World say what it will to it, I Acknowledge, I Adore *That Eternal Love* which Induced Thee, to Create so many Beings, Out of Nothing for my Sake! I Adore Thee for that Charity which Inclines Thee so to Dwell, and take Thy Repose In me! I Adore That Goodness, which Disposed Thee to call thy Self * *The Lord of the Sabbath*, that Thou mayst Work Thy Charity and Act Blessings for me, upon *This Day*, as well as on the other Six, in which thou didst Create the Universe; Let not my Sins, O my God, prevent the Effects of so Charitable, so Beneficent a Purpose! III.

* St. Mat. 12. 8.

I Adore Thee, O Divine *Samaritan!* Thou Conqueror and Enemy of Devils! Those who Murmured against thee, Blinded by the Malice of their Hearts, Knew not what they said! But I, who Know that Truth, most Humbly thank thee, that thou hast Graciously Inform'd me in it: Thou hast Appeared, O my Redeemer,

deemer, under the Figure of a *Sinner*, and as a *Samaritan*, for the World Knew thee not! Thou hast Travelled upon Earth; *There*, Thou hast found the Wretched Innocents, Injur'd, Wounded by their Enemies, without Succour, without Redress! Touched with their Miseries, thou hast taken them upon thine own Shoulders, thou hast Dressed their Wounds, And Shewn, Thereby, that thou art, TRULY, *Our Neighbour, and Our Friend.*

Open to me, O Lord, This Heart So full of Charity! Give me a Sense, that I may tell how Great the Joy was, When they So in Contempt, Called thee a *Samaritan*, Thy Generous Passion and Tenderness Moved thee to Become One for my Sake.

On the One Side thou wast Afflicted, that those Revilers Acknowledged not the Favours thou wast doing them; And, On the other, thou hast an Extreme Desire, that they would Permit thee to Heal their Wounds: Thou wouldst not that *That* Duty of *Charity to Our Neighbour*, Concerning which thou hast made such an Express Command, should be more fully Accomplished, by any one, who could Love his Neighbour better than thou Didst. Thou, O Lord, art Our Best and Our Truest Neighbour! Do thou, therefore, have Regard to *That Law* which thou hast Enacted! And do that, In Respect to me, which thou wouldst have me do Out of Love to thee! Love me! Let me Feel the Fruits of it, The Blessed Effects of thy Tender Compassion! Be Ever with me! Let thine Eyes be Always fix'd upon me! Since from Thence must come the Vertue, Strength, and Light I stand In need of, to Accomplish

complish that which Thou Desireſt, and Expecteſt from me.

I Laud alſo, *O Divine Jeſus*, and from the Bottom of My Heart, Adore That Great Mercy Thou haſt Expreſſed to a Sinful World! When, not Entring into the Houſes of The *Prieſts*, and of The *Doctors of the Law*, of The Great Ones of The World, or of the Higheſt Quality and Power; Thou didſt Condeſcend to the Deſires of the Sinful *Zaccheus*, who had a mind to See Thee, and to Receive Thee In his Houſe, altho' thou Kneweſt How They would Murmur at it! From whence Proceeds *This*, O Lord, Is it, then, Poſſible that The Deſires of Sinful Men, Imperfect as They are, ſhould be ſo Precious in thy Sight! IV.

But, Can There be, O My Saviour, *A Greater Sinner* than I am! I Deſire Thee, as *Zaccheus* did, O My Salvation! I Deſire Thee, O My Supreme Bliſs! I Deſire Thee, O My God of Mercy! I Deſire Thee, O Thou who art All My Riches! My Friend! My Redeemer! My Father! My Treaſure! All My Glory, and My Utmoſt Felicity! I Languiſh with The Deſire to ſee Thee! But I am ſo Mean, Like *Zaccheus*, that The Crowd that Surrounds Me, the Throng of My Sins, prevent my Sight! All My Comfort is that Thou ſeeſt me; That Thou Knoweſt me! And that Thou Requireſt no more of me, than that My Inclinations ſhould be perfect, and provided they be not Counterfeit, but Sincere and True.

Grant, therefore, *O Truth Eternal!* That This Defective Heart of mine, may, at leaſt, be Sincere In its Deſires and Inclinations towards Thee, Look upon me with Mercy! As Thou didſt

didst Behold *Matthew* and *Zacchæus*: Come to me! And O Let me Receive Thee With Love, and with Joy! Bring SALVATION and PEACE to THIS HOUSE! Here Let thy Habitation ever Be! And Seek not for Those, where Thou art not Desired.

V. I Bless Thee, O my God! For all the Blessings Thou hast Bestow'd upon *The World*, and which the World has not Acknowledged; For All Those Blessed Works, for which it has Murmured Against Thee! And I Render Thee A Thousand Acknowledgments that Thou hast Condescended to Endure The Persecution of Malignant Tongues, for my Consolation! Teach me that Endearing Truth, which Thy Holy Prophet has Published to us, when He said to Thee, * *Thou shalt Hide Thy Servants, O Lord, In* THE SECRET *of Thy Presence; Thou shalt defend Them, from the Strife of Tongues.*

* Ps. 31. 20.

What a happy Retreat is This, O my God! What a Charming Security, This *Secret of Thy Presence!* When wilt thou Receive My Heart into it, that I may Become Insensible to all the Malicious Censures of the World! They Reflect upon that They see Not, and Know Nothing of; But what is it that He does not See, who is hidden in the Secret of thy Presence? Who is Refreshed with the *Wholsom Waters of Thy Grace*; Who Enjoys the Secret Whispers and Communications of thy Love; And who Possesses that *hidden Treasure* which the World is an Entire Stranger to? Why, O Lord, am I so sensible and Affected with what Men say, if it be not Because I still Love what they Esteem, and Relish not those Sweets that are Concealed in Thee!

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If Thou art My Food and my Life, what Signifies it, if The World Looks upon me as A Poor and Wretched Creature! If I am Wholly Taken up In Thy Love, Need, I Vex my Self if it be Said I am Good for Nothing! Let me be Uſeleſs, O my God; Unto The World, Provided I am but Poſſeſs'd of Thee! Let Mankind Say what they Think Fit of me, If I Can but Hear thy Voice! Let them Murmur againſt me, In their Malice, Provided I Can but Enjoy thy Favour! Let Them Reject me, So that I may but find Thee, *My Saviour*; Let Them *Tear*, and *Rent* me into Pieces, if So be I Can but Pleaſe and Satisfie MY JUDGE! What Hurt will Their Revilings do to me; Or Rather, what Advantage Shall I not draw from them, if my Love to Thee be but Sincere and Truly Fixed, O Thou Only Happineſs of my Soul! Split, O ye Heavens! Open, O ye Eternal Gates! And Let me See my Lord, and my *Supreme, Sovereign Felicity!* But O How Extravagantly Do I Talk! O Moſt Divine Jeſus! Heaven is Deaf to my Prayer, and Hears me not; My God is my Heaven; He has Eyes to See me; Ears to Hear me; A Good-will to Love me; Wiſdom to Know me; Light to Conduct and Guide me; And Moſt Engaging Beauty to Charm and Inchant me!

Thou Beholdeſt me, O Thou *Living Heaven!* And Thou Penetrateſt into my Moſt Secret Thoughts; Shew thy Self Alſo to me; And Let me Look into thy Glory; O Receive me Into thy Self; Shut me up Cloſe Within Thee! And after that, Let the Ill-Natur'd World Revile me as it Will; O Thou Divine and Eternal

nal Bliss! O Amiable Felicity! Of thy Self Thou art Neither Obdurate, nor Ever Shut to Sinful Men! Be not then So to me! If I am Dry and Barren, Let thy *Heavenly Dew* Distil, and fall upon me! If I am Blind, Communicate *A Ray* of thy *Divine Light* unto me! If I am Over-Charg'd and Laden with Sins, Raise and Enrich me with Thy Mercy!

I know that Thou Desireſt me; And Thou Knoweſt that I Desire Thee! Open, Then, Thine Arms, Expand them Wide to Receive me! It is my Duty, for ever, to Love, and to Bless Thee; But it is Thy Concern to Possess me! Let me, then, Leave my Self, that I may Live in Thee! O Divine Love! Who Giveſt me The Grace to Desire Thee, Thou Knoweſt what I am, and Thou Knoweſt thy Self; Work in me whatever Thou Knoweſt to be Beſt; And then Require, Afterwards, whatever Thou Shalt Please, of me.

VI. O King of Glory! Who didſt Suffer that Harden'd Generation to Blaspheme, in *Calling Thee Beelzebub*, for Our Consolation; And haſt So Sensibly Felt those Pains which were My Due, and to Soften them to me, haſt Condescended to Undergo Them Before me in their Utmoſt Force and Rigour; O Teach me to Value the Felicity of being Like thee: The World Rightly Determines that A Subject Ought to Honour his King, and pay Such an Allegiance to Him, Even as to Undergo the utmoſt Labours, to Endure the Greateſt Injuries, to Hazard the Greateſt Dangers, and Even to Venture his Life for his Sake; What then Ought I To Undergo, To Bear, To Hazard for the Glory of my God!

When

When Thou didst Offer thy Self to The World, for their Guide and Pattern, Thou wast Sensible of their Weakness! Cast Thine Eyes upon Mine, O Lord, and Tear that Over-Tenderness and Nicety Out of my Heart, that it has Conceived in Favour of the World's Opinion! Thou Knowest that the Opinion and Discourses of Men would be Indifferent to me, if I had not A Desire to Please them: When Will the Time Come, O my God, When, being Reproach'd Even by thy Servants, I Shall not Trouble my Self about That; But Desire and make it my Only Aim, to please Thee?

'Tis from thy Bountiful Hand that I Receive whatever is Good or Profitable Either for my Body or my Soul! And I hope, Besides, for *Those Infinitely more Transcendent Blessings of A Better World!* Is it then So Great A Vexation to Bear with Malicious Tongues, for thy Sake! If I am but So Happy as to Please Thee, Ought I not to Rest Satisfied, and Comfort my Self with *That Thought*, tho' I Displease my *Fellow Mortals.* Thou Knowest, O Divine Wisdom! the Imperfections and Infirmitys of my Heart, Thou Seest how Feelingly it Resents What Men Say, and how much it is afraid of Those Reproaches it is Apprehensive of; Enlighten me with thy Glory, that I may Discover This Truly; And Support me, by *Thy Grace*, that I may Give them No Just Occasion to Reflect Upon me! That I may Entirely Seek to do thy Blessed Will; That I may Never Deviate from *That*, for All that the Malicious World Can Devise to Say against me upon Account of it: That I May not Lose any of My Precious

Time

Time In Justifying My Self unto Them; But, That I May pass My Life in One Continued Endeavour to Serve, and Please Thee, and to Endure PATIENTLY whatever Severitys they May Load Me with, for MY INTEGRITY and LOVE TO THEE!

VII. O, Lord of Eternal Truth! Thou Hast Commanded us to pray for Those that Revile us; And thou Hast Enjoyn'd us this Duty, purely that we Should be Heard by Thee: I Beseech thee, then, O My God, to forgive All those who Speak Ill of Me! Thou Knowest that, in the Utmost of their Rancour, They Say Much Less of Me than I Deserve; And that the Malice with Which they Persecute Me, does not Ballance the Great Goodness Which Moves thee to Bear with Me! But Thou, O Lord, Canst put an End to all, by Giving Me Grace to Amend, and to Them A Sense of the GUILT of their MALICIOUS TONGUES.

Let not any One of Them, who have Cost Thee So Dear, PERISH, upon My Account; Give Them A True Sense of the Purity of thy Love, that they may Desire it; of the Riches of thy *Holy Spirit*, that they may Ask it of Thee! The Sweet, and Endearing Ravishments of thy Conversation, that They May Seek After it; And of the Blessings which thou Communicatest to Those That Love thee, that being Wholly Engaged in thy Love, they may have no More Time to Think on me, not for my Interest, but their own Spiritual Advantage.

Teach those *Criminal Tongues* to Sing Thy Mercies! That they may Wash Off their Pollution

lution by Praise and Hallelujah to thy Glory! Pour thy Healing Charity into those Cancerous and Calumniating Hearts, that they may Help me to Correct and Reform whatever they Can find within me that Deserveth A Reproof; And Unite us All, by A Sincere Love, that We may Joyn Together in Blessing thy Holy Name.

HELP me, O Sacred Mother of God! And Assist All Those who Speak Ill of me, that We may Obtain A Place Among the *Houshold* of *Thy Blessed Son:* And you, O Blessed Spirits! Assist us, that Our Tongues may Never Cease, Here Below, to Chant Out *His Praise*, Before Whom you are Ever Uttering your Eternal Holannahs In the Kingdom of His Glory, *Amen.*

THE

THE Twenty Second Instance OF THE SUFFERINGS OF Our Blessed Saviour.

CHAP. XXII.

In Their Opposition *of His* Doctrine, *and* Censuring *his Works*.

1. ONE Sin That's Grown Into A Habit, Generally, Draws A Great Many, Others After it, Which are Very Often Greater, and more Dangerous Than the First: For, as the Holy * Father Says, *The Trespass that is not Wash'd off By Repentance*;

*St. Greg.

pentance, Draws us by its own Weight, into New Extravagances; And the Man who does not keep a Constant Watch over himself, knows, by his Own Experience, that if he neglects to Mortifie the Propensity he finds within him, to Any Particular Vice, THAT *Single Tincture will Expand, and Open the Door to many Others:* Upon this Account it is, that Our *Grand Adversary*, Applys Himself, above all other Things, to foster This Evil Inclination within us: And, if he does but Gain his Point, *In This Matter*, He Troubles Himself but Little to Oppose us, *In the Other Works we do*, Resting Assured that so long as This Door is Open to him, He shall never want An Opportunity, and the Means *to do us Mischief:* It is also of very Little Concern to him, whether Our Sins be Great or Small, Provided They be but Habitual; For Although One falls not often into the most *Scarlet Guilt*, the most Light and Smallest Piccadillo's become Dangerous, when They are Neglected and Not Regarded: And, according to the Saying of the Wise Man, † *He that despises Litle Follies, will Insensibly fall into the Greatest.* † Prov. 10. 1.

We may often make this Observation in Religious Houses, where Every One is taken up about the Improvements of his Soul; *Here*, One does not fall, All at once, into the most Dissolute Extravagance, by the deepest Crimes; But by Little and Little, and by the Least Instances of Remisness: They do not Relapse All together: The Mischief begins, perhaps, with One or Two, who are follow'd by some others, and at last, by All. They Apostatize by Degrees; They Cool at first, and Grow Languid in their Primitive Zeal and Fervency towards what is

Good; Some Give their Tongues a Loose; Others take off their Guard, and Run into Destruction; Afterwards One Begins to Murmur, and then to Grow Impatient; After That He fals into Disobedience, and, at Last, into A *Dis-relish* of All *Rule* and *Discipline*.

Some Leave off All Thought and Recollection, by Idleness; Others by A Fond Affection and Pursuit after Trifles; Many by keeping too much Company, and Conversation with the World: And thus, from these Little Threads, which are hardly Visible in the Beginning, thro' the Indulgence of Superiours, who only take Notice of Abominable Irregularities, such strong Cables are form'd at Last, that neither Iron nor Wire can be able to untwist them.

The Natural Inclination and Propensity, that's always in us, to Transgress, will ever Produce these Evils, if we be not very Careful to stop their Course, in the Beginning: What Irregularities, for Instance, do not Arise from that Evil Habit of Murmuring, which, at first, seems only a Divertisement? From hence comes Lying, Rash Judgments, Malicious Interpretations, Detraction, False Witnessings, Anger, Indignation, Contempt, Derision, and Afterwards, an Obligation of making Restitution of Injur'd Honour, which is hardly ever done, and Religion and Conscience do both Require.

In A Word, The Custom of Murmuring against Every Thing, spreads so much Corruption Over Our Judgments, that *Evil* is, often, *Called Good*; And even Vertue itself Reproach'd thro' the Passion One has for Contradicting, and

Lessening

Lessening The Authority of others; and of doing 'em All the Hurt we can.

There can be no Greater Proof of This, than the Excess into which Those fell, who Murmured against the Blessed JESUS: Since they soon Proceeded to the Contradicting of his Doctrine; and to find Fault with his Works: The more *Sublime* and *Manifest* his Doctrine was, the more They strove to *Darken* and *Be-mist* it; And the more Amazing and *Miraculous* his Operations were, the more They Laboured to cry Them down. II.

The Spirit of *Murmuring* and *Contradiction*, because it was not Stifled in its Birth, was the very Occasion of All these Evils; And, Besides the Wrong it did to Those who gave Themselves up unto it, it most Extremely Afflicted Our Blessed Saviour also, Because it Touch'd Him in the most *Sensible* and *Tender* Point: For, By This Wickedness, They hinder'd the Propagation of the Gospel, They Scandalized the Weak, and Staggered the Strong; They Encouraged the Wicked, and Harden'd the Unbelieving; And Gave the *Blessed Jesus* Himself, the Mortification, to see Himself Oblig'd to Take up that Time, in Opposing their Evil Suggestions, which He had Designed to do *The Work of their Salvation in.*

When he gave them Hopes of the Forgiveness of Their Sins; They Accused Him of BLASPHEMY; When He Prov'd Himself to be *The Son of God*, They said, *That He Gave Witness of Himself*; And so, They Eluded and Mock'd at the *Power of his Miracles*, which he wrought among Them, for the Confirmation of His Doctrine: They Publickly Question'd

Him, that They might Destroy the Credit He had obtain'd among the People, by what Authority He Presum'd to Preach, and to Work Miracles; When He perform'd Any in the Synagogues, to Confirm the Doctrine which He Publish'd, They drove the People out of them, under the Pretence of its Being *The Sabbath-Day*; They often met together, to Contrive some Means to hinder Him from it, under Colour of *The Publick Good*, and for fear, they said, The *Romans* should think that their Design was to Sow Sedition, and *Raise an Insurrection among the People*: If His Disciples said Any Thing, privately, in His Defence, they were Run Down with the Cries and Hootings of the Multitude.

The *Pharisees* seeing that the Truth Constantly prevail'd, said Among Themselves, † *Perceive ye how ye Prevail Nothing? Behold, the World is Gone after Him!* Which clearly shews, that their Malice, and the Aversion they had in their Hearts, to his Doctrine, was yet *Greater* than what *Openly* Appear'd: But the Blessed JESUS knew their Intentions; And, by His Divine Wisdom, penetrated into their most Secret and Hidden Thoughts.

† *St.* John. 12. 19.

III. Beholding Him, One Day, followed by A Great Throng of People, who *Carried Palms in their Hands*, And *Eccho'd Thousands of Hosannah's to his Glory*, They were Transported with Rage, and highly Complain'd he did not Quell Those Acclamations of the Multitude; They propos'd divers Queries to Him, in the Face of All the World, which were very difficult to be Explain'd or Answer'd, on Purpose to Confound Him; But, finding Themselves Confuted, and struck

struck Dumb by his Answers, they were forc'd to Betake Themselves to have Recourse to more Secret Artifices and Intrigues to Ruin Him.

Thus the Blessed JESUS pass'd the Three Years of his *Ministerial Function* in Continual Contradictions, 'till his Enemies, seeing All their Attempts against him, to be in Vain, Resolv'd to Arrest Him; But, the Officers who were Charg'd with it, Return'd without Executing this Order, being perfectly Charm'd with Our Blessed Saviour's Doctrine: Then they forbid the People, at their Peril, and under Great Pains, not to Follow Him; And as they met with fresh Reports, every Day, of *New Miracles*, that He did, They took Care, most strictly to Examine Those who had been Healed, that They might find something even in *His Miracles*, whereby to Condemn Him.

And Thus it was They Treated Him, on Account of the *Paralytick Invalid*, who was so Miraculously Cured by the *Pool-side*; And, in Respect to Him who had been Born *Blind*, whom, for having too evidently satisfied Them as to All their Questions, They shamefully Turn'd out of the Synagogue: They even Endeavoured to have put *Lazarus* to Death, who had been Lately Raised, from *A Dead Corps*, to Life, only Because Many Believed in *Jesus Christ*, upon the Account of This Miracle: In a Word, upon every Occasion they could contrive, or Lay hold on, They Persecuted This Divine LAMB, Of which He had Complain'd Long Before, by the Holy Prophet; * And, since That, by *That Holy Apostle*, saying, † *All*

*Isa. 65. 1.
† Rom. 10. 21.

the Day Long I have stretched forth my Hands, Unto a Disobedient and Gain-Saying People: He retired sometimes, out of *Juda*, to give Way to the Storm; or else Remain'd Conceal'd there for some Days; And Return'd from Time to Time, to see whether They were not a Little more soften'd, and come to a Better Reason; So soon as He Disappear'd, They Exacted with the utmost Severity, to know where He was; And, when He shew'd Himself unto them, they were Mad, *to Desperation*, Because They could not Hurt Him: They followed Him Every where, to Pick out some Opportunity to Thwart and Cross Him, And, Thus, They Caused a Thousand Vexations and Pains, to Him, who was only Seeking *Their Salvation.*

'Tis Impossible to Express How Sensibly He was Touch'd with their Ingratitude; But it is yet much more Incredible, How far the Malice of the Heart of Man will carry Him, when it is once Wedded, and grown Obstinate, in Opposition to the Known Truth, and *The Works* of *Almighty God:* For, what Reason had They, Thus to Persecute the *Innocent*, and *Immaculate Jesus!* He did not fly their Company; He Disdained not to Eat with them; He went into their Houses, whenever He was Invited to Come there; He Healed their Sick and Wounded; He inform'd them in Divine, Celestial Truths, with A most Unparallell'd Sweetness, and A Patience that was Amazing and Invincible.

IV. He never Sought to Lessen their Credit in the World, or to Diminish Their Reputation, Their Riches, or Their Prerogatives: He, even Publickly Declar'd, That Men Ought to *Obey* the

the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, And to do All That They said, tho' They in Every Thing Opposed Him: After their having Testified to Him, That upon his *Word* they were Ready to Acknowledge St. *John Baptist*, for *Their Messias*, They would not Receive *Him*, *Himself*, in That Quality: But, This Spirit of Obstinacy, in *Gain-Saying* the Truth, did not Cease with That Ungrateful Generation! It is A Persecution which Religious and Good Men, for the Trial of their Integrity, Endure still, in some Measure, Every Day They Live; Not only from Strangers and The unknown; But even from their Friends, their Parents, their Brethren, and Those whom They have Obliged; And, oftentimes, even from Those Persons who have the Greatest Repute and Authority in the World; And whose Aversion and Discountenance are so much the more Dangerous, as it is commonly skreen'd under the Mask of Piety and Justice: This Cross is so Heavy and very Grievous, that a Real Good Man, and True Servant of Almighty God, stands in Need of a Great Deal of Constancy and Integrity, not to be Shaken and Overcome, when such as These, Omit Nothing to Deprive Him of *All Belief*, in the Employments of his Zeal.

It's the Custom of the Wicked World, to Over-Bear, and Run down Those, who are most *Useful and Beneficial* to It; And from whom It might Draw the Greatest Good and Advantage: Not That it is Apprehensive of Any Mischief from Them; But Because it would Rather Choose to be Depriv'd of All These Blessings, than Ever to Receive Them from Another's Hand; And to Remain in Misery, than

than to ſee the Succeſs and Reputation of Thoſe, who Draw Any from it: A Secret Jealouſy has A Greater Influence upon them, than Either Juſtice, or Conſcience, The Love of One's Neighbour, The Conſideration of the Publick Good, or of One's Own Intereſt; And its firſt Care is, Ever to Oppoſe the Deſigns and Reputation of the Servants of God.

Such was the Malice of the *Jews*: For, Nothing could have been Poſſibly, more *Glorious*, to Them, nor of Greater Advantage, than to have Acknowledg'd and Received *The Bleſſed Jeſus, The Lord of Heaven, and the Holy of Holies, The Great Ruler of The Elements, The Tree of Life and of Death*; But for Fear any One ſhould Believe, that They had any Conſideration, or Eſteem for Him, They Reſolved to Contradict and Croſs Him, in every Thing He ſpake or did: When the Poiſon of Envy has Once Seiz'd upon Thoſe, who make Profeſſion of Vertue, They Become Cruel Perſecutors: And it is almoſt impoſſible to Reclaim them; Becauſe that, under the Pretence of Zeal, They Abandon themſelves, without Any Reſerve, or Check, to their Paſſion; And Perſecute Vertue, at the ſame Time, that They Perſuade Themſelves They are Endeavouring to Support and Maintain it.

V. Many Things might be ſaid in this Place, for the Comfort of *Juſt and Good Men*, who Suffer the Like Contradictions, Ever, Extremely Senſible and Pungent to Thoſe who *Truly Love God*, and Their Neighbour: But, ſince the Lord, They Serve, Permits it, Thus, to *Emblazon* and *Enrich their Crown*; It Ought to Suffice them to Caſt Their Eyes upon the *Bleſſed Jeſus*,

Jesus, And, Thankfully to Acknowledge the Favour that He has Thought Them *Worthy* to be Treated as *He was*, who is THEIR PATTERN, and THEIR JUDGE.

There might also, Still, much more be said, Conducive to the Correction and Reformation of Those who Are Addicted to *This Vice*: But Since They Shut Their Eyes to *The Light*, who shall be Able to Cure their Infatuation and Blindness? Let us Endeavour, at Least, to Prevent Others from falling Into it, by Representing the Passage, to them, of The Prophet, In which Almighty God, having said He Could no Longer forbear to Punish The Great Iniquity of His People, He Adds * *Because there was no Truth, no Mercy, nor Knowledge of God to be Seen In Them; Nothing but Perjury, and Lies, and Murders, and Adulteries, and of Blood, Touching Blood.* And He Adds, at last, to Justify this Dreadful Denunciation, and to Shew The Measures, and Fullness of the Malice of This People, that *They were Become Like Those who* CONTRADICT THE PRIESTS! As if He had said, The Crimes of The People are Mounted to Such a High Degree of Enormity, that They Enqualize Those who STRIVE WITH, or CONTRADICT THE PRIESTS: For, The Priests, being Given to The People to *Preserve Religion*, The *Knowledge* of The *True God*, And The *Purity* of *The Law*; To Appease the Divine Wrath by Reconciling their Maker to Them, by *Prayer* and SACRIFICE; To Resist or Contradict The Priests, is to Take all Those Opportunities and Means, of Redress and Refuge from Them, and to Despise the APPOINTED INSTRUMENTS of Their Cure:

* Hosea 4. 1, 2.

Cure: How Great A Crime was it, Therefore, to Contradict The SUPREME VERITY Itself, To Oppose *The Son of The Living God!* *The* ETERNAL PRIEST, *According to The Order of Melchisedeck!* The REDEEMER, and The SAVIOUR of All Mankind! However we Expatiate upon This Subject, 'tis Impossible to Exceed The Guilt of This Madness!

But Because it Happens, that A Man, Sometimes, falls Into This Irregularity, without being sensible how Deep A Guilt it is to Oppugn CONSCIOUS TRUTH, We must Take Notice Here, That The Custom of Opposing Good, is a Sort of COMPACT with *The Father of Lies*, A SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST, An, *Almost, Invincible Obstacle to Salvation:* Because All Truth, In whomsoever it is found, is A Participation of Divine Wisdom: Therefore, To Set One's Self against the Truth, which is Preach'd to us, is to Withstand and Oppose Almighty God Himself: And He Who Accustomes Himself to Maintain what He has Once Espoused, Against *The Light that God has Manifested to Him*; And, that will not Retract his Errour, when He is Convinc'd of it, Come by little and little, to Loose ALL Respect for *Truth*, and for *Vertue*; and without Shame or Remorse to Contradict whatever is Most Evident, and most Holy.

* Eccles. Therefore The Wiseman Advises us * *Not to Contradict The Word of Truth In any Manner, and Rather to Suffer The Confusion of Our Ignorance:* For There is no more Certain Mark of a Weak Spirit, than Not to be Able, Either to Support Truth, or to Renounce Our Errour: There is such a Charm In Truth; And It is such

Such an Unison of Our Nature, that it Perfects Man, In Rendering Him, † *Perfectly Free*, According to the Word of *The Eternal Truth*. * Ps. 8.

A Divine Contemplation,

Upon The Contradictions The Blessed Jesus Suffer'd In his Doctrine.

O *Word Divine! Son of the Living God! Eternal and Perfect Truth!* To Bless and to Adore thy Majesty, I Joyn with All The Heavenly Host; Angels, and Saints, And All The Just; with Thy whole Church; With All Thy Creatures; Every Perfection, and All Thy *Works* which Ever Glorify Thy Name, In Each Distinct Order, of the whole Creation! Thou art *My Way*, *My Truth*, and *My Life*; Thou art *The Way* that Leadeth to Thy Self; *The Truth*, by which I Come to Know Thee; And *The Life*, by which I Live In Thee; *A Way* where no Danger can Accrue; *Truth* which Cannot be deceiv'd; Life Immortal that Can Never Die: He that Walketh not with Thee, Wanders In the Wrong; He that does not Behold *Thy Light*, is Blind; And He that does not Live In Thee, is Ever Dead: Thou art *A secure Path*, A *Truth Immaculate*, and *Life Indeed!* Thou art *The Living God*, whom I Serve; The *True God*, I Adore; And The *Infallible Saviour*, I follow: Lord! Do Thou Direct my Steps, I.

Steps, that I may Never follow Any other Traces; Enlighten me, that I may Continually See *Thy Truth*; And Live Thou, Ever, In me, that I may have No Other Life, but *Thee*, Within me! And, Because Vertue can Proceed from No Other hand but Thine, Deliver me from The Sins I Ought to fear, from mine Enemies, and from my Self: For, Unless Thou shalt Deliver me from Sin, I shall soon Relapse, and fall, More and More, by My Own Frailty; And then, I shall Become so much the More Wretched, as Thou Wilt have Prevented me, more Generously, by Thy Mercy.

Thou Knowest, O Lord, that *Thy Light* will Only Serve to Blind me, the More, if it does not Penetrate Into The Bottom of my Heart; And if I do not Walk, whilst it Shines, Upon me: Remember that Thou hast Said to Those,
† St. Luk. 18. 9. † *Who Think Themselves Inlighten'd*, that Almighty God Would Have them Acknowledge their Blindness; And, If They did not do it, They would Become yet more Blind Therein: I Own that I am Born Blind; And that, of my Self, I must Continue for Ever In that Condidition; *Have Mercy on me, O Lord! Thou Son of David!* Let me Behold my Redeemer! That I may know Thee, In thy Works; And, that Charm'd, by The Beauty of Thy Brightness, I may follow Thee every where, and for ever, In This I do not Ask more than Thou, Thy Self, Desirest to Vouchsafe me; and what has Cost Thee so much Pains and Labour: Grant me Grace, then, to desire it; Grant that I may deserve it from the Strength of my Desires; And Receive it, afterwards, with the *Humblest*

Thanksgivings:

Thanksgivings: As Thou Wouldst not Bestow the Benefit of Thy Blessings, on me, without *my own Free Will*, and Co-operation, with Them; so Neither Can I stir a Finger, towards it, without The Mercies of Thine Assisting Grace. Teach me, therefore, to Understand and know them; To Desire Them; To Receive 'em; To fix my Heart upon them; and to Pay a due Regard to, and Value them according to their Worth, That They may, Dispose me According to Thy Will.

But, How, O my God, Couldst Thou Refuse me, what I Ask of Thee; Although I am Unworthy of it; And know not which way to make Acceptable Address Unto Thee! Art not Thou The Same *Merciful Redeemer*, who * *didst Spread out thy Hands, All the Day, unto A Rebellious People, to an Incredulous, And Contradicting Generation?* Since Thou art the Same, and thine Arm is not Shortned, nor thy Love Diminish'd; And that Thou art not Less *My Saviour*, than *the Redeemer of All the World*; O Hear me, And be Thou my Succour, and make Me Feel thy Mercies.

* Isa. 65. 2.

Remember with what Forbearing Goodness, and what Bounty Thou dost Treat *That Incredulous Nation*; With what Condescention Thou didst Bear with them; And with what Patience Thou didst Connive at their Continual, and most *Provoking Contradictions*: *Thy Light* had so Blinded them, that they could not Endure Even that Others should be Enlighten'd by it; They Labour'd to Eclipse the Glory of thy Works, by their Calumnies and Revilings, and, to Prejudice and Divert Mankind from thy Knowledge, and the Love of Thee, they Opposed the most

Evident

Steps, that I may Never follow Any other Traces; Enlighten me, that I may Continually See *Thy Truth*; And Live Thou, Ever, In me, that I may have No Other Life, but *Thee*, Within me! And, Because Vertue can Proceed from No Other hand but Thine, Deliver me from The Sins I Ought to fear, from mine Enemies, and from my Self: For, Unless Thou shalt Deliver me from Sin, I shall soon Relapse, and fall, More and More, by My Own Frailty; And then, I shall Become so much the More Wretched, as Thou Wilt have Prevented me, more Generously, by Thy Mercy.

Thou Knowest, O Lord, that *Thy Light* will Only Serve to Blind me, the More, if it does not Penetrate Into The Bottom of my Heart; And if I do not Walk, whilst it Shines, Upon me: Remember that Thou hast Said to Those,
† St. Luk. 18. 9. † *Who Think Themselves Inlighten'd*, that Almighty God Would Have them Acknowledge their Blindness; And, If They did not do it, They would Become yet more Blind Therein: I Own that I am Born Blind; And that, of my Self, I must Continue for Ever In that Condidition; *Have Mercy on me, O Lord! Thou Son of David!* Let me Behold my Redeemer! That I may know Thee, In thy Works; And, that Charm'd, by The Beauty of Thy Brightness, I may follow Thee every where, and for ever, In This I do not Ask more than Thou, Thy Self, Desirest to Vouchsafe me; and what has Cost Thee so much Pains and Labour: Grant me Grace, then, to desire it; Grant that I may deserve it from the Strength of my Desires; And Receive it, afterwards, with the *Humblest Thanksgivings*:

Thanksgivings: As Thou Wouldst not Bestow the Benefit of Thy Blessings, on me, without *my own Free Will*, and Co-operation, with Them; so Neither Can I stir a Finger, towards it, without The Mercies of Thine Assisting Grace. Teach me, therefore, to Understand and know them; To Desire Them; To Receive 'em; To fix my Heart upon them; and to Pay a due Regard to, and Value them according to their Worth, That They may, Dispose me According to Thy Will.

But, How, O my God, Couldst Thou Refuse me, what I Ask of Thee; Although I am Unworthy of it; And know not which way to make Acceptable Address Unto Thee! Art not Thou The Same *Merciful Redeemer*, who * *didst Spread out thy Hands, All the Day, unto A Rebellious People, to an Incredulous, And Contradicting Generation?* Since Thou art the Same, and thine Arm is not Shortned, nor thy Love Diminish'd; And that Thou art not Less *My Saviour*, than *the Redeemer of All the World*; O Hear me, And be Thou my Succour, and make Me Feel thy Mercies.

* Isa. 65. 2.

Remember with what Forbearing Goodness, and what Bounty Thou dost Treat *That Incredulous Nation*; With what Condescention Thou didst Bear with them; And with what Patience Thou didst Connive at their Continual, and most *Provoking Contradictions*: *Thy Light* had so Blinded them, that they could not Endure Even that Others should be Enlighten'd by it; They Labour'd to Eclipse the Glory of thy Works, by their Calumnies and Revilings, and, to Prejudice and Divert Mankind from thy Knowledge, and the Love of Thee, they Opposed the most

Evident

Evident Truths. They Weaken'd, as much as it was possible for them to do it, the Power of thy Miracles; And, before All the World, Withstood the Influences of thy Heavenly Doctrine: Upon every Occasion they set Themselves Against Thee; And Became more Hardned in their Wickedness, by the Favours they Received from thy Goodness; More Provoking upon thy Patience; More Obdurate by thy Tenderness; More Infatuate by thy Brightness; more Dangerously Ill by thy Gracious Prescriptions, and More DAMN'D *by Thy Tenders of Redemption*; For, they Hated their Salvation; And were fond of their Perdition!

III. It had been much more Easy unto Thee, *O Lamb of God!* to have been Sacrific'd afresh Every Day, than to have Experienc'd the Obstinacy of That Hardened Generation, which was the Fountain, and Original, of Their *Eternal Ruin:* The Thief that was Converted upon the Cross, Obtain'd Paradice; But They, in the Midst of the Temple, where They Appeared to be Saints, Purchas'd Hell: Yet Thou didst Bear with Them; Thou didst Labour *hard*, to Overcome Their Obstinate Hardness, by thine own Meekness; and to Conquer their Malicious Hatred by thy Beneficence: Thou couldst Gain Nothing upon Them; They would Perish, notwithstanding All Thy Goodness; And, After so much Pains, Thou hadst still the Grief to see them LOST and UNDONE FOR EVER.

O Blessed Lord! Turn All These Charitable and Engaging Cares towards me! I Confess THE TRUTH, which They would not Believe; I Adore *The Vertue* which They Persecuted; I praise *the Works* which They Contradicted;

Since

Since Thou hast done so much for Them that *Rejected Thee*; Come, O my God! to Him that Calleth Thee; Thou hast said, † *Open your Mouth Wide, and I will fill it.* O! Let All the Faculties and Powers of my Soul, and Every Particle of my Body, change Themselves into so many Open Mouths, that Thou Mayst fill them! I Expand my Heart, as much as Ever I am Able, by my Continual Sighs and Pantings; And I Languish for Nothing so much as to find it Replenish'd with Thee and Thy Blessed Spirit; Come then, my Dearest Lord! *Send thy Light and Thy Truth*, with All those Ineffable Graces with which Thou art Accustomed to Inspire and Fill thy Servants. † Ps. 18. 10.

IV. I know very well, that shouldst Thou Examine my Merits, According to the *Rigour* and *Strictness* of thy JUSTICE, Thou wouldst *Turn away thine Eyes, Lest They should Behold the Vanity of my Actions:* Thou wouldst stop thine Ears, that Thou Mightst not Hear my Voice; And wouldst Deprive me of thy Charming Presence, since I am no Less Guilty, than those *Jews*, who Contradicted thy Words, and Oppos'd thy Works with so much Obstinacy and Unbelief: For I Believing what They Deny'd, and Adoring what They Resisted, I do not, for all that, cease to Rebel against thy Light, and am still Deaf *to thy Voice*.

If I am Undone, my Misery proceeds from my self, and Not from Thee; Thou hast Informed me, before I knew Thee; Thou hast Called me, when I fled from Thee; Thou hast Enlighten'd me, when I thought not of Thee; If I Sinn'd, I felt the kind Reproaches which Thou whisper'd into me; If I grew *Lukewarm* and Insensible,

ble, Thou didst Enflame me; Thou didst Prevent me with thy Blessings; Thou didst support me by thy Grace; Thou didst Encompass me with thy Mercy; And yet I still followed my Restless Passions; I Resisted thy Blessed Will, and still Ran Counter to thy Holy Law; I went on Blindly in the Pursuit after False Pleasures, which Poison'd and Deprav'd my Heart and Soul.

I am One of Those, of whom Thou so justly Complainest, that *They turn their Backs to Thee, and not their Face*; Thou hadst Thine Eyes fix'd upon me, and I only look'd downward upon the Earth; Thou Soughtest after me, and I Ran from Thee; Thou madest me the Object of Thy Care and Love, and I fix'd my Heart upon the *Creatures*; Thou wast *All* in *All* in me, But I Separated my Self from My God! If I have not Contradicted THY TRUTH, by my Belief, I have deny'd it by my Actions; And if I have not Found Fault with Thy Doctrine, I have forsaken thy Service.

I cannot Confess my Guilt, with sufficient Sorrow and Contrition! O God of Mercy! How often I have Resisted Thy Grace; And How I still Continue to withstand it, Every Day I Live. I am supported by thy Grace, and yet am Ever Frail and Feeble; Enlighten'd with thy Doctrine, and yet always Blind; Enrich'd with Thy Gifts, and yet am ever *Poor*. It's in vain to Represent unto Thee, here, O my God, the Miseries with which I am Encompass'd; They are All better known *to Thee*, than to my Self; But since Thou Beholdest Them with the same Compassion which moved Thee to Bear with Them, O Heal these Wounds with the same

Love,

Love which prevail'd with Thee to Give Thy Self unto me! It's true, that after Thou hast met with so many Repulses from me, I don't deserve to find Thee upon my first Endeavours to Return unto Thee; But, at Least, Do not Refuse the Humble Confession, and the Sincere Sorrow that Thou seest in my Heart, for having Displeased Thee! What have I Gained by Resisting Thee! What is Left me, from my Transgressions, and past Folly, but the *Remorse* and *Bitter Pangs*, in seeing my Self, Before Thee, *Poor*, Abandon'd, All over covered with Sores, whereas I might have been Rich and Happy by the Communication of thy Gifts.

Thou art Not, O Charitable Father, Like the Rich Worldling, who saw *Lazarus* Lying at his Gate, without having any Sense or Compassion on his Miserable Condition: Thou art not so sparing of thy Charity, since Thou Dispensest thy Blessings *Liberally*, even to Those very *Persons* who do not so much as Ask for Them; Thou dost not Reserve them to thy Self alone; For Thou art THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD! Grant me, then, a Share in those Infinite Treasures, which are Compriz'd in Thee! Vouchsafe in Charity, to this Poor, Offending Soul, the Pardon and Forgiveness of his Sins! Bestow an Alms of Thy Grace, A Ray of thy Divine Light to his Blind, Infatuated Soul! Restore this *Languishing Trespasser*, to his Health! A Little Spark of thy Heavenly Fire to this *Lukewarm Christian!* A Small Tincture of Obedience to this Rebel-Subject! Mollify his Heart of Flint, and *Quicken him to a New Life, that's Dead in Trespasses and Sins!* Since Thou hast not

Refused me thy Precious Blood, to Wash *the Crimson* from my Soul, O let me feel *The Power and Vertue of it!* Take my whole Heart along with Thee! All the Soft, Devoted Passion that is in me, every Faculty and Power in my Mind, And All my very Soul! Put a Stop this very Moment, to all my Folly and Extravagance, my Unhappy Wanderings, and that Ungrateful Obstinacy that has ever prompted me to Murmur and Repine against thy Providence or Wisdom! Take Every Part and Faculty of my Soul and Body, that Belongs to Thee, out of the Hand of thine Enemy's; Preserve and keep it Safe, and let it never more be taken from Thee!

VI. Wilt Thou not Allow, O my God! that the World should Reject me; that it should Despise me, and Revile me for thy Sake! 'Twas thus they Treated the poor, Blind-Born Man, who proclaim'd the Wonders of thy Power; But, being Cast off by the World, Because He took thy Part, and not being Able to find Thee Out, Thou, thy Self, didst find Out Him; Thou didst judge Him Worthy to Behold Thee, *With those Eyes which thou hadst Open'd!* And, out of thy Love didst Bear it, that the World should abhor Him upon that Account: It was *then*, that He Beheld Thee to the Purpose; That He Knew Thee, That He Adored Thee; That He followed Thee; And that Thou didst vouchsafe to Receive Him ever after, into the Number of thy Disciples; How Happy should I be, were I but Registred in that Number! If the Eyes, in my Head, be any Obstacle to that Blessing, Lord! make me Blind, that I may see thee! And, if Worldly Objects take away my

my Sight, and Rob me of *thy Vision*, O fix my Eyes Entirely and Only on thy Self; And make my Soul to feel thee, that it may be Enflamed with thy Love! Doſt Thou, then, Eſteem Thoſe ſo much, who are Deſpiſed by the World, whoſe Favours and Good Opinion I have all along ſo Courted, and ſo paſſionately purſu'd? O How much am I to be pitied, if thou ſhouldſt judge me Unworthy of the Favour thou didſt vouchſafe to that poor Blind Man! So ſoon as He ſaw Thee, He Became Rich! And found Himſelf Delivered out of All his Miſeries and Troubles.

O Divine Riches! Unknown to the World! Why doſt Thou Suffer me ſo Long to Beg Aſſiſtances, ſo Weak, among the Creatures! Diſcover THY SELF to me, O my Treaſure! Appear to my Eyes O Infinite Beauty! Thou didſt ask Nothing of the Poor Blind Man, Only to Believe in Thee, and to be Diſpos'd to ſee Thee; And thou immediately didſt ſhew thy Self unto Him! Behold me, my deareſt Lord! in the ſame Diſpoſition. I do Believe, and from the Bottom of My Heart, I do deſire to ſee thee, to Know Thee, to Love thee! O do not Refuſe me That which thou haſt Given me the Grace to Covet! It's true, that *that Blind Man* had Beheld no External Object before thy Bleſſed Self, which Engag'd His Heart; And that on the Contrary, the *Phariſees*, full of the fond Idea's and Paſſions for the World, would not be Acquainted with Thee; but Thou haſt not Limited Thy Mercies Only to the Blind! St. *Paul* was not ſo, when Thou didſt make Him Blind, that Thou mighteſt be ſeen by Him; If, to Qualify the Soul for thy Sight, it's neceſſary

that All other Objects be Removed from the Eyes; I Agree, that Thou shouldst *Close mine for Ever, Blessed Lord! that they may not see Vanity!* That my Soul may only Contemplate Thee! O *Pure Light!* O *Truth Divine!* O Sweet *and Eternal Rest of my Soul!*

☞ O Most Holy Mother of God! O Most Humble Servant of Our Lord! Who Ever, Prefer'd the Submission of A Handmaid to the Dignity of A Mother! Help me to Abase my Soul, that it may be Undeceived in the Illusions of This World! That it may Ever and Entirely Submit to TRUTH; *That the Truth may Make it Free!*

Ye Celestial Spirits, who Behold, who Desire, and who Enjoy Eternal Bliss! Since God has Created Me, *In that Happy State*, with you, Raise my Soul, by your Ministrations, Above This World! That being Dis-engaged from These *Low* and *Base Affections*, and from my Own Depraved Nature, I may Live with you Eternally, *In the Vision of God.* Amen.

THE Twenty Third Instance OF THE SUFFERINGS OF Our Blessed Saviour.

CHAP. XXIII.

Upon The Snares which They Laid, Against Him, to Take away his Life.

THE Grief and Anguish which these Continual Contradictions Brought upon Our Blessed Saviour, were yet much more Sharpen'd and Augmented, by the Malicious Contrivances of the *Elders of the People*, The Priests, the Doctors, I.

and *Pharisees*, who never Ceas'd their Stratagems, in Laying Waite to Catch Him, in his Words, whereby they Might have Some Specious *Pretence* to persue him with their Malice: This was not One of the Least Afflictions which the Holy Jesus Underwent; There being Many Circumstances, of *This Trial*, which Render'd it most *Quick* and *Pungent* to Him: And the Holy Prophet did not Foretel, of these *Traps* and *Subtle Instances* of the Malicious Sanhedrim, against the Life of Our *Immaculate Redeemer*, but, always, Under the Representation of A Most *Sharp* and *Bitter* Vexation: *The People*, Says He, *Lie in Waite with the Rich*; *They Lurk In Secret to Destroy the Innocent Their Mouth is full of Cursings, Bitterness, and Deceit*; *Much Pain and Sorrow is Couch'd Under their Tongue: They have Prepared A Trap for my Feet, and they have Trepan'd my Soul therein: they Have Planted A Snare in the way that I should Go, they have Conspired Together to make me Fall:— The Proud have Laid a Snare Privatly——They have Spread their Nets; They have Planted their Gins in my Path! And the Snares of Death Have Encompass'd me!* And the Holy Prophet Expresses Himself to the Same Purpose, Representing how All their Evil Projections Tended to no Other purpose than to Rob the Blessed Jesus of His Life:

They made it their Business to Follow Him Wherever He went, that they Might not Loose any Opportunity to Oppose, and Cross Him: When they Found the People Gather'd Together about Him, they Came athwart him in

in his Way, as the Holy Evangelist has Observed, Asking Him A Thousand Questions, with A Most Malicious Importunity, *Setting their Snares*, and Seeking Some Occasion of Accusation Against Him, from the Words He Spake: Somtimes, the Sadducees and the *Pharisees*, appear'd, Themselves, In Person; and Sometimes, they Deputed their Other Instruments, and Disciples, in their Stead; Sometimes, they put on A Mask, and Executed their Malice *with a Blind*; As when they Tempted Him, with that Question, *viz. Whether it were Lawful to Give Tribut to Cesar or not*, And Sometimes, with a Bare Face, as when *They Set the Woman Taken in Adultery Before Him.*

It would Make one Wonder, here, at the Obstinate Malice of *This Infatuated Generation*; For, Whilst they Could not but be Sensible, that All their Wicked Craft and Stratagems were in Vain; And were, So Often, Convinc'd, Even by their Own Answers, which they were Forc'd to Make, Till they had not A Word to Offer in Reply to what He Urg'd; and that they Drew the Scorn and Contempt of the People upon Themselves Thereby, yet, they were not Confounded at it; But, Abandon'd to All Shame, They Still Openly Persisted In their Malice to persue Him, in Persecuting *The Saviour of the World*, Evin Unto Death, Altho' They Could never Gain any Advantage against Him, but Always Came Off with Dishonour and Reproach: Upon which Account we find Him Rendering Thank's to God, *His Father*, by the Mouth of the *Royal*

Prophet, Thereby Exposing the Injustice of this Invidious and Harden'd People: *Thou Hast Protected me, Says He, against the Congregation of the Wicked; And against the Multitude of the Ungodly: For they Have Sharpened their Tongues, Like A Sword; they have Bent the Bow, with an Heart full of Bitterness, to Fierce the Innocent In the Dark: They have Sought Iniquitys; And put no Limits to their Malicious Endeavours; Their Strokes have Been Like those of the Arrows of A Child, that have Rebounded upon Themselves!* And Again, In Another Place, He thus Expresses it. *They, have Prepared A Fatal Purpose in their Snares, which they have Planted Secretly and without any Cause or Provocation, In Vain have they Attempted upon my Life, they are Fallen Themselves Into the Netts which they have Spread for me.*

III. This is a Plain Demonstration that Vertue Wants nothing but Itself to Defend it against the Attacks of Malice: It is Sufficient, of its Own Strength, whenever it Appears in its own True Light; He, Therefore, who Sets Himself against it, Can Never Touch it, but by Representing it FALSLY, by Defacing, and Shadowing it, Under the Appearances of what is *Vicious*: Behold here, the Meaning of All those vile *Intrigues*, and *Stratagems*, Of all that Malicious Craft, and Subtilty, and Base Forgery, and Injustice, which are the Only means that *Wicked Men* Must Make use of, and by which, alone, they Can Approach Vertue to its Prejudice; And yet, which alway's Vanish and become Useless Wherever it appears to

Support

Support itself In its *Proper Colours* and *Resistless Beauty!*

This is A Truth which the Philisophers of the Heathen World, Have all along Acknowleg'd, when they Say, that *The Fortress of Vertue Never Could be Carried Either by Storm, or Surprise:* That as the Sun Obscures the *Lesser Luminaries*, So Vertue Surmounts Both Pain and Wrong; And that ADVERSITY Has Less Power over *This Christian Grace*, than the Boisterous Hurricanes and Tempests Have Over the Sea: The Raging Storms Raise up the Billows of the Boiling Ocean; But, far from Emptying the Profound Abyss, they Rather Purge and Purify its *Mighty Waters*; And then, the Briny Liquid Returns again to its former Calm and Smoothness; Thus Patience, In Time, Sooths and Qualifies the Rage of Anger; Truth dissipates the Shades of Falshood, and makes it vanish as a Shadow; Humility Confounds the Arrogance of Pride; And *The Lord*, as the Royal Prophet has express'd it, *Will not Leave the Rod of Sinners upon the Heritage of the Just, Least the Righteous should put their Hand unto Iniquity.*

We have, moreover, This Advantage, drawn from the Malice of the *Jews*, that it Gave our Blessed Saviour An Opportunity to Reveal many Divine Mysterious, Secrets which have Enlightened our Faith, Kindled, In Our Souls, *The Love of God*; And, which are a most Solid Consolation to Them that truly serve Him. IV.

When

When They Accused Him as a *Prophaner of the Sabbath*, Because He Healed the Sick upon that Devoted Day, He not only Gave us to Understand, That *Man was not* made for the Sabbath; But that *God Instituted the Sabbath On the Account, and for the Sake of Man*; That we, Mortals, should spend this Hallowed Day, In a more Strict and Solemn Devotion to the Service of God, than In the Rest; But hereby also He Undeceives, and Sets our Souls In a Clear Light, In Respect to the vain Superstition of the *Jews* on the Account of it.

When They Tempted Him, by Requiring some Miraculous Sign from Heaven, He Informs us, In This DREADFUL TRUTH, That *Infidels* and *Unbelievers*, who do not Improve, and Profit, either by the Graces and Gifts of God which They Receive, or the Evident Demonstrations and Testimonies which they have, already, before their Eyes; *There shall be no other Token Given Them but That of the Prophet* Jonas, *who, after He had been Three Days in the Whales Belly, Converted the City of* Niniveh *by his Preaching*; By which Expression, The Blessed Jesus Represented his most Glorious Resurrection; And the Success and Progress of his Gospel; To which He added, that *The Queen of the* South *was Come from the Utmost Borders of the Earth to hear the Wisdom of* Solomon; *But that he was* GREATER *than* Jonas, *and than* THAT MAN OF WISDOM; *and yet that they did not Believe him!*

When

When They Demanded of him, whether *It were Lawful for a Man to put away his Wife*, He shew'd Them wherein the Law of Matrimony did Consist, which had been Abused, and Alter'd by the *Rabinical Interpretations*, and *Traditions*; And took an Occasion from thence to Inform them that *An Un-polluted*, CHAST SOUL *has a Near Resemblance to the* VERY ANGELS OF GOD!

Being asked by what Authority he Wrought Those Miracles, he Performed, he Declared his DIVINE ESSENCE, by telling them that The Messias was More than *mere Man*, *Since* David *himself Acknowledged him to be his Lord, notwithstanding he had Humbled himself so far, as to take upon him to be the Son of* David, *according to the Flesh*.

When They Urg'd Him about the Tribute, which The *Jews* pay'd to *Cæsar*, He Enlighten'd us into This most Excellent Maxim, That the Means to Cultivate a Good Conscience, and preserve the Soul In Inward Peace and Calm, is to *Render unto God all that Belongs to God*; And, *to all the World, that which is its* RIGHT.

When they Uttered Reproach, against Him, Because his Disciples did never *Fast nor Wash their Hands Before they Eat*; To The First of these Revilings, He Reply'd, *that it was not usual for any one to Fast In the Presence of the Bridegroom*, Because the Conversation they had, with Him, Ballanc'd for the Neglect of their Fasting, that is to say, In the Utmost Strictness

Strctness and Severities of this Christian Duty: And His Answer to the Second was, that *We Ought to be much more Sollicitous and Exact In cleansing and purifying the Heart, than about the Neatness and Washing of the Outer Man.*

Being Traduc'd for *Eating with Publicans and Sinners*, He Introduc'd the Instance *of the Prodigal Son who was so Graciously Receiv'd by his Father*; Of the *Lost Sheep that was Brought Back Into the Fold by the Good Shepherd*; And of the *Piece of Silver that was sought after with Care and Sweeping of the House*; Adding thereunto, that *Mercy was more Acceptable with God than Sacrafice.*

When They Set the Woman, taken In Adultery, before Him, to see whether He would Condemn her, to be Ston'd according to the Law of *Moses*; or if he would Adjudge her Contrary to the Express Edict of the Law; He Presented us with This Most Admirable and Excellent Instruction, That, in Order to Judge, *Well*, of Our Neibour, we Ought to be Well Acquainted with Our Selves; And that, He who is *Inwardly* and *Truly* Conscious of his own Guilt and Frailty, ought not to Condemn Others, but with the utmost Caution and Reserve: After this, he was Graciously pleased to Let us see how Readily, and with what Good will He forgives poor Sinners, by turning towards that Miserable Offender, and say to Her, *Woman! Since no one has Condemned thee, Neither will I Condemn thee; Go In Peace, and Sin no More!*

What

What shall I say, or how Express my Self, upon the Reply He made to those who demanded, of Him, *which was the Greatest of the Commandments of the Law? Thou shalt Love the Lord, Thy God,* Says He, *with All Thy Heart, and with All Thy Soul:* This is the Greatest and the First Commandment: And This is the Second, which is Like Unto it, *Thou shalt Love thy Neighbour as thy Self:* Many Other Questions there were, Couched under the Greatest *Craft*, and *Artifice*, with which, besides All the Rest, they Tempted his Righteous Soul; as About *The Resurrection of The Dead*, about The Miracles He Wrought; about his Person, To All which He Answer'd, after the Same Manner, for the Instruction of his Church; making the Malice of his Enemies, at the same time, Subservient to our Salvation.

And Thus it is that the Servants of God, when they are Labouring under Persecution; Content, and Joyful Under the Secret Testimony of a Good Conscience; Ought to Travel On with Fear and Love; Not to Think it Worth their While to Trouble Themselves In Contriving Way's and Means How to Resist these WICKED INSTRUMENTS of their Afflictions, but to Endeavour to Reconcile Them to God; Persevering, Evermore, In the Practice of Vertue, Improving All Opportunities of Witnessing their Faithfulness and Integrity to God; Continuing, without any Stop, or Impement, in their way, the *Faithful Imitators* of *The Blessed Jesus*; *Sworn*, and *Avowed Enemies* to Those That Oppose Him; The Ample

Treasuries

Treasuries of His Sacred Truths; The *Gallant Defenders* of *His Cross*; and the *Triumphant Conquerors* Over The *Malice of the World.*

A

Divine Contemplation,

Upon The Traps and Snares with Which His Enemies Way-Laid, to Trepan and Destroy Him.

1. O Most Dear Saviour! Thou most Endearing Object of My Soul! How is it Possible that Any One Can Resist those Engaging Influences of thy Goodness! Thou art all Love, thy Self, O Amiable Redeemer! Thou art Ever Expressing Tenderness and Love Towards thy Creatures; But Meetest no Return! Thou Shinest forth upon them, *O Thou Light of the World!* But they do not Know Thee! O thou Fountain of all Celestial Treasure! Thine Arms are Open, and Expanded Wide to Receive Every Creature that Approaches Thee! And yet no One Comes unto Thee! Thou Laboureſt to Search us Out, O thou Life of my Soul! Thou Sueſt, as if it were A Favour, that we Should Bestow Our Hearts upon thee, and

and we Slight thee, we Shun, we Flie from thee! How Can this be Possible, Most Divine JESUS! Can there be any thing, In thee, that One Can Hate? Or Rather, Can we Meet with Ought without thee, Or Out of thee, that's Worth Our Love or Notice! But, O My God! Let not Our Ingratitude Insense and Turn Thee from us!

Remember How thou Hast Told us, that *There were Twelve Hours in the Day: It is In St. John. Thee, O Lord, to be So Gracious as to Bestow *One of 'em* upon me, that Therein I May Learn to Know, and to Love thee: O Let Me not Loose this Moment, But Begin, this Very Instant, altho' it be So Late, and May be perhaps, the *Last of my Life!* Since I have been So Wretched, as to Squander away the Rest, without any Sense, or Love of My Only God, and Saviour, Let me, at Least, Begin Now, *at the Eleventh Hour!* They, who Had Stood Idle, and Had Pass'd away the whole Day without doing *Any thing*, and Came into thy Vineyard, in the Evening, where Accepted of thee, and did not Faile of the Reward of Pleasing thee; For, Thou Canst be Displeas'd with none but those who Will not Come unto Thee: O, do thou, Therefore, forget All that's past, O my God! Receive Me, from this Moment, Into the Number of thy Servants; O Let my Heart be All Inflamed Towards Thee! O Let My Soul Adore thy Majesty for Ever! Let Every Faculty, within me, Cling unto thee, and Embrace thee!

When

II. When Shall I be able to Say Effectually, * Rom. 8. with the Apostle * *Who shall Separate me from the Love of Christ?* But if I Love thee Sincerely, why Cannot I Say this, *in Truth?* No; Blessed Lord! *The Fear of Death* Shall Never *Separate* me from Thee, Since thou art *my Life*; Nor the *Fondness of this Life*; For I am Entirely Resolv'd and Ready to *Lay it down for thy Sake*; Nor the *Powers of Heaven*, for THOU art Mightier than They; Or *Things Present*, For they are Fugitive, and Vanish Like A Shadow; Nor *Things to Come*; For there is Nothing Elce that Can Fix my Heart upon them, but Because thou art in Them; Nor *Tribulation*, For Thou art my Only Consolation; nor *Distresses*, For Thou doest Enlarge and Fortifie my Heart; Nor *Hunger*, For thou dost Satiate my Soul; Nor *Poverty*, For thou art my Treasure, to Enrich me; Nor *Perills*, For thou dost Secure me; Nor *Persecution*, for thou dost Protect me; Nor *Sword*, Nor *Torments*, For thy Endearing Charms Make *All those*, Sweet, and Joyful to me; Nor *Bondage*, For in thee I Enjoy *Perfect Freedom*; Nor Even *Liberty* Itself; For 'tis my Felicity to be Enslav'd to thy Love; Nor *The Creatures*, For they are Nothing Before thee; nor The Vicissitudes Or Revolutions of this World; Nor the Crafty Devices and Intrigues of Mine Enemies; Nor Mine Own Miseries, for Thou wilt Change All these Evils, for me, Into So many *Blessings*, and *Rewards!*

III. If Thou art for me, O my God! Then who shall be against me! Since Thou hast Given Thy

Thy Self for me with Such an Unbounded Charity, Wilt Thou not Give me All things with Thee! In Loving thee I am Invigorate, I am patient, I am Meek and Charitable, I Believe All Things, Hope All Things, Am All Things, Expect all Good, and Avoid all Evil: For Whilst my Soul is Fix'd, on Thee, Thou art my Fruition; Whilst I Possess my Saviour, I Can Want Nothing; Whilst thou art the Object of my Heart, I am the Rational Creature Thou didst Make me, yea I am an Angel, I am Blessed; I am Dead to Sin, And Only Live to Thee, my God! Without thy Love, what Blessing am I Capable of; and what Mortal Evil Reigneth not within me?

There is this One Grievance, above All, O my Saviour, that Sits Heavy on my Soul; That I have Liv'd so Long without Devoting my Heart to Thee! But, after all, This is the Affliction of A *Living Man*; For when I am past Feeling of this Compunction, I am, as A Creature without Life! Grant me, O Divine Jesus, that I May be pierced with A Contrite Heart, that Ever I Should be So Wretched as to have been Insensible unto Thee; That I may be Inflam'd with the most Ardent Love, that my Heart May Burn with an Holy Fire Towards thee! Enlighten, Thou, my Soul, that I May Behold Thy Sweetness, thy Bounty, thy Ineffable Charity; And that, Being Charm'd and Ravish'd with thy Amazing Glories, I May Become Insensible to all the Rest: *This* is what

Thou Expectest from me; For *This* it is that Thou Bearest with me and thy Holy Spirit Waits So Long upon me: Hasten, then, O Lord, that Happy Moment, In which I Shall Begin that Faithful Love, and Devotion that Shall Never Have an End!

IV. How Truly does that Unhappy Wretch Deserve to be pitied, O my Saviour! Whose Heart is *Hardened* and Insensible Unto thee! He Lives to no Other purpose, but to be unhappy and to Perish: He is Distracted, because He Directs His Conduct, from the Impulses of His own Depraved Will, and not by thy Wisdom; He is In A Worse Condition than those who Labour Under Any Common Sickness, Placing His Confidence In Human aid for Cure, and not In thy Help; And, more than Dead, Imagining that He Can Live without thy Providence and Preservation: But why Should I talk at this Rate, O my God! Who Can Possibly Express the Wretched State of Such A Creature? What is There that Can Befal Him Worse than to Resist Thy Goodness, and to Take pains to Seek out Something to find Fault with In *Thy Perfection!*

How Deplorable is the Misery of Man's Heart, when 'Tis Empty and Deprived of Thy Love? He is then at Work to Contrive Some Shade to Darken Thee, O *Eternal Light!* Something to Accuse Thee of, O *Divine Purity!* To Impose upon Thee, *O Wisdom Infinite, and Incomprehensible!* As if He Could

Could force Thee to Retract, O Thou *Truth Unchangeable*! Or Catch Thee In what Thou Uttereſt, O Thou *Word Uncreate*! But, why do I Preſume to Dive More Profoundly Into Thine Endearing Heart, O my Jeſus! Is it not Sufficient for me to Know that Thou art Entirely Senſible of This Blindneſs, and Infatuation of The *Jews*; That Thou Seeſt it throughly, and Thou Beareſt With it; That Thou Makeſt no Remonſtrances againſt it, but art Silent to it; And that Thou Suffereſt Each *Harden'd Obſtinate*, Among them, to Treat Thee as He pleaſes!

Thou Seeſt Into all the Malicious thoughts of Thoſe Ungrateful People! Their Implacable Hatred to thy Perſon; Their Plots againſt thy Vertue; Their Artifices, and Intrigues againſt thine Innocence; Their Baſe Deſigns againſt thy Wiſdom: Thou Seeſt who They are; Againſt whom they Rebel; Upon what Helliſh Principles they Act; what Execrable Vanity and Wickedneſs they are Driving at; Thine Eyes do Perfectly Behold all this, And yet Thou art Still Silent! Thou Suffereſt them to Go On, O Divine Patience! O moſt Inconceivable Bounty, only Worthy to be Adored! For what is there that Can Poſſibly be *Deficient* In thee O Divine Jeſus! Not to make thee be Belov'd by All the World! Thou art A Conſtant Friend; Faithful, Dear, Patient, Compaſſionate, Generous, All-wiſe to do all things for the Beſt; And Able Infinitely to Enrich the Soul, with

Those Inestimable Treasures, and Perfections, which 'Tis not Possible to Conceive.

V. I Adore Thee, O Spirit Divine! Thou Boundless Ocean of all Good! Thou *Ever-flowing Spring*, and *Fountain of All Mercy's*! Thou Eternal Flame of Ever Glowing Love! Thou Inconceivable Treasure of Supreme Felicity! * *I will take my Sweet Repose In* THIS *Downy* BED OF PEACE; *and Under this Security will I Lodge my Soul In Rest*! Ah! If these Miserable, Wretched Jews, Had Only Laid their Snares to Draw thee to Them! What Divine Graces Wouldst thou not Have Bestow'd upon them! What Pleasure wouldst thou not Have Taken to Discover thy Divine Secrets to them, had they not Examined and Search'd into thy Words, but Only to Inform Themselves in the *Profound Weight*, and the Importance of 'em! How Willingly Wouldst thou Have been *Depriv'd of All*; Had they but only Sought the Treasures thou art full of! It is thy Usual Custom, most Bounteous Lord, to Impart them after this Manner; And it Seems as if thou Tookest Pleasure to be thus Deceived! For I Can no Sooner Call thee but thou Comest, Although thou Knowest that I Shall Soon forsake thee; I ask Pardon of Thee, and Thou Indulgest me Therewith; And art So Gracious as to Accept the Good Inclinations and Will I Have to Sin no More, Although thou knowest my Infirmities, and that I Shall Relapse again! Thou Consentest to the Reconciliation I make with thee, Although thou Foreseest that I Shall

* Ps. 4. 8.

Shall Break the Contract! And thus, thou, *Of thy Goodness*, Trusteſt to my *Frailty*, Becauſe thou art alwayes Waiting for that Happy Moment, when I Shall Give my Self at Laſt unto thee, with an Effectual purpoſe, and Reſolution Never to Abandon or Forſake Thee More!

But, which is it that Contrives the Greateſt Stratagems, O Divine Jeſus! Man, to Surprize and Over-reach *Thy Excellence*, Or, *Thy own Inſuperable Goodneſs*, to Gain Souls! Wretched as I am! Is it Poſſible that I Should be So Weak A Creature, and that Thou Shouldſt, Still, Take Such Pains, and uſe Such Endeavours, to Reduce me to thy Obedience! The Jews, as Wretched and Worldly Minded as They are, Have the Aſſurance to Attempt thine Incomparable, and Divine Vertue, againſt which it were Impoſſible they Should do any Thing; And Thou, O Lord! Being Almighty as thou art, How Comes it that Thou doſt not Conquer Me! Me, who am no More but a Collection of *Duſt* and *Aſhes*! How Can I Avoid thoſe Nets, Thou Spreadeſt, of thy Love, which thou Haſt planted, all Around, to Captivate my Soul! Theſe are thy Nets, for this purpoſe, when Thou Suffereſt me to fall Into Tribulation, and to Meet with any Tryals or Temptations; To be Diſciplin'd with thy Rod; To be Terrified by thy Juſtice, Or Endeared by thy Gifts and the Graces of thy Mercy; To be Enamour'd with the Proſpect of thy Rewards In Heaven, thy Providence On VI.

Earth, Or Frighten'd with the Terrour of Damnation, and I avoid them all! But Alas! What is it that I would Escape, Infatuate as I am? From whence is it that my Miseries Arrest and Stop me, and prevent My Falling Into those Delightful Snares!

*Ps. 116. 17. * *Break my Chains*, O Lord! That I May fall Into thy Bands, and *Then will I Offer unto Thee the Sacrifice of Praise, and Call upon thy Holy Name*! But How Can they be Broken, O Thou Salvation of my Soul! It's True, that Thou Spreadest thy Nets all around me, but thy Pleasure is that I Should Consent to be Taken by Them; Thou Wouldst Gain my Will, above all The Rest, Because Thou Wouldst not Constrain my Soul; for Forc'd Affection is no Love at All: O do Thou thy Self, then, O my God, do thou Tear Asunder these Links of Iron, which Hold and Fasten me to *the Flesh*, and to the World,

† Ps. 54. 6. And † *I will Freely Sacrifice Unto thee*; And I will Love Thee Pure, and Unconfin'd! For, Although I am So Heartily Enamour'd of those Vain Objects which do Withdraw and Separate my Soul from Thee; Custom, In this Excess, is Grown So Strong, and Has Link'd Together Such a Chain to fix my Heart Unto them, to Such A Degree, that Altho' I See what's Good, and Approve of it, yet I do not Depart from my Iniquity! I Pray to Thee, O my God! But my Requests are Languid and far from Being perfect! Because, tho' I ask Some Small Share with thee, yet alas! It is not for Thy Sake! Thy Grace,

Grace, is Only Sufficient to Break This Chain! To Deliver me from my Self, and Transform me Into thy Image! Perfect Thou thy Work within me; And Grant That I may Become, for Ever, the Devoted Slave of thy Divine Love!

A Form of *Praise*,

And Thanksgiving, to The Blessed Jesus, The Son of God; For those Great and Important Truths, *He Imparted to The World, at The Very Time His Enemies, The Jews, were Preparing Their Snares, and Laying In Waite, to Destroy Him.*

I Render Thee A Thousand Thanks, O Thou Ever-flowing Fountain of All Good! Not Only that Thou Graciously Tendereſt Unto me All those Treasures thou, thy Self, Enjoyeſt; But for this, also, that Thou Draweſt Good, Even Out of Evil for my Salvation! How Shouldſt thou be for Ever Praised and Ador'd for This Ineffable Love 1.

and Charity, which Instead of Avenging thee of Thine Enemies, for all Their Execrable Contrivances and Stratagems, against Thy Life, is Become, unto my Soul, a Fountain of Celestial Joy and Comfort, of Wholsom, and Saving Doctrine, and Divine Truth, to Enlighten me, and Bring me unto Thee! Lord, Grant me an Understanding Heart, and A Discerning Spirit, that I May Have the Sense to Comprehend them, and Adore Them; Imprint them Deep upon my Soul; That I may Devote it unto Thee with all its Strengt hand Facultys, O Thou, my Only and Supremest Good!

II. I Adore Thee, O King of Peace! That thou wouldest not that I Should Have The Wisdom of *Solomon* for my Standard; Nor Terrify me, with the Denunciations of *Jonas*; Nor Dazle me with the Splendour of Worldly Grandeur; But That Thou Hast Vouchsafed to Set Before me The Pattern of A Wisdom that is All Divine, and Draw My Soul unto Thee, by the Certain Assurance of Eternal Riches and Treasure; The Hopes of an Everlasting Kingdom; And The Endearing Charms of thy Love! Thou Art Greater Than *Solomon*, Because, Thou Art Out of the Reach of All Earthly Appetite; And Incapable of Changing; And, that Inward Peace, which Results from Thee, is far Surpassing All Conception, All Serene, and full of Celestial Joy, and Consolation: Thou art Greater than *Solomon*; Because thy Treasures are Inexhaustible; And Thy Glories are

are Immortal, and Can Never have an End: Thou art, in very Truth, Greater Than that Other * Prophet, who had Vanquish'd Death; For It was by no Other Vertue but the Almighty Efficacy of thy Power that He Appeas'd the Tempest; That He Converted Nineveh, and Received that Repenting People: Lord! Grant that These Divine Graces may not Add to my Condemnation! Let my Heart be New Moulded by Them, that my Love may be Fix'd upon Them, that I may Become Thy Faithful Servant In This Life; And Receive *That Great Recompence of Reward*, That's Laid up in Store, for me, In The Next.

* Jonas.

III. I Laud and Magnify thy Holy Name, O Thou Immaculate Lamb of God! Thou Bridegroom of Chast Souls! O Wean and Separate my Heart from all Impure and Earthly Appetites, that I may be Entirely Devoted to that Purity, that Shines So Bright, among the Angels of God! And, Because I Cannot Arrive at so Refin'd a State of Soul, but by the Assistance of thy Holy Spirit, nor Grow up into Such a Perfection, as of which Thou, Thy Self Hast Said that † *All Cannot Attain unto it*; Do Thou Enter Into the Battel, for me, with Mine Adversaries; Kindle in my Soul the Flame of Thy Celestial Love; Draw This Heavy Heart of Clay unto Thee by These Spiritual Allurements; O Purify and Cleanse it from Every Low and Gross Desire, And Make it Become Worthy *Of the Lord that Bought it*.

I Worship

IV. I Worſhip Thee, O Prince of Peace! thou Guide and Saviour of A Sinful World! Becauſe Thou Haſt Condeſcended to Become Their Shepherd! Eternal, Never-ceaſing Praiſe and Hallelujah, be Aſcrib'd unto Thee, for that Thou Haſt Opened The Kingdom of Heaven, Even to Publicans and Sinners! I am of this Number! Lord, Leave me not Behind Thee; Take me Near unto Thee; And Keep me at a Diſtance from my Self! O Let my Soul be Raviſh'd with Thy Glory! Let me Embrace Thee; Let me Vow My Self for Ever to Thee, and Acknowledge Thee only as my Sovereign Lord, and for my Only Good!

V. I Adore Thee with my whole Soul, O Father of all future Ages! But 'tis with A moſt Sincere and Faithful Heart, And not with the Artifice and Hypocriſy of The *Phariſees:* I Confeſs Thee to be The Lord and Original of All Eſſential and pure Truth; The Light Divine which Leads us unto God; The Faithful Spouſe of Every Juſt, and Believing Soul; Who, Without Reſpect of Perſons, Openeſt the Door of Thy Love to Every Contrite Creature that will but Come and Enter in: Teach me to Give unto The World, to Cæſar, and my Neigbour, The Things which thy Holy Law has Preſcribed as Their due; And to Render unto Thee, O my Only Beatitude, that Immortal Being, In me, upon which Thou haſt Imprinted Thine own Image: As It is Created only for Thy Glory, it Ought to be Entirely Devoted unto

to Thee! Deliver me from the Guilt and Burden of Those Dishonest Taxes, and Unjust Tributes, which I have with Too Much Readiness Comply'd to pay to the Usurpers of thy Kingdom; That I may Never More place any Confidence or Dependance on any other Object but thy Self, O my God, who art my Rightful Sovereign and Only Lord.

I Adore Thee, O Thou True Bridegroom to my Soul, O Never Let it Wander any More, nor Prostitute its Chastity, for Ever, to any Other, or Strange Loves! Thou art all my Happiness, and all my Glory; There Can be no other Object that I Ought to fix my Soul upon but Thee alone; And Thou art all my Heart Can Wish for, or Desire: Enrich me with this Wedding Garment, with which Thou Wilt have all Those be Clothed, whom Thou Wilt Welcome at The Marriage Feast! The Nuptials of the *Lamb!* O Hide not thy Face from me! Let my Ears be evermore Acquainted with thy Voice, that I may know thy Call, and never Listen to the Insinuations of The Serpent, That Old Dragon, who never Ceases His Endeavours to Betray me, and Corrupt my Faith. VI.

I Adore Thee, O Divine, and Inconceivable Wisdom! Who hast Informed me That Both *Good* and Evil Proceed out of The Heart: Thou art of Purer Eyes than to be Impos'd upon by Any False Appearances; They Penetrate into the Depth, and Truth of Things: *Create, In me, a Clean Heart, O Lord,* VII.

Lord, and Renew a Right Spirit Within my Bowels: This is as Easy an Operation for thee to Make perfect, as 'Tis Difficult and Even Impossible for my Weakness to perform: thy Bounty is More Powerful than my perverse Obstinacy; Thy Glorious and Resplendent Light is Stronger than my Infatuate Blindness; O Thou Son of Glory! Shed Thy Rayes into This Dark Hollow of my Heart! And There do Thou Create That Fountain of *Living Water*, That shall Make it Flow, with all The Faculties of My Soul Enamoured of Thee.

VIII. I Adore Thee, O Father of all Mercies, who art Alwayes Ready to Receive Thy Prodigal, and Fugitive Children upon their Return! I am not Worthy to Lift up My Eyes to Heaven, nor to be Accepted Into the Number of Thy Children! O Grant me Only that I May be Received Into The Lowest Rank of Thy Servants, and I Shall be Content.

IX. I Glorify Thee, O Thou Good Shepherd of A Lost and Scatter'd Flock, whom, with Such Indefatigable pains and Care, Thou Laboureſt to Reduce into thy Fold! I have been Wandering at A Greater Distance from Thee; O Let There be Joy In Heaven for my Return, and my Salvation! Thou Faithful Companion of Sinful Creatures, Vouchsafe to Come and Enter into This Poor Habitation, that Salvation and Peace May Enter Therein with Thee: There Let Thy Mercy Shine

Shine Apparently, Because That Thou Loveſt Better than any Other Sacrifice.

I Adore Thee, O Thou Sure and Certain Refuge of The Miſerable and Broken-hearted! As, with the Charms and Sweetneſs of Thy Words thou didſt Mollify the Hearts of Thoſe Embitter'd Men who Came to Apprehend Thee, and Mad'ſt them to Confeſs, That *Never Man Spake as Thou Speakeſt*, do Thou Alſo Change and Soften the Obdurate, Wicked Diſpoſition of my Heart, that I may Underſtand thy Truth: And as Thou didſt not Condemn that Sinful, and Adulterous Woman whom They Set Before Thee; Accept me, alſo, O my Gracious Lord! For I know that with Thee I Shall find Nothing but Forgiveneſs, and Comfort, and Salvation, and Grace, and Love. X.

Let Thine Enemies Contrive Whatever Ambuſhes They pleaſe; Let Them Make Uſe of Whatever Stratagem they will, Or Can Invent with the moſt Black and Malicious Artifice to Ruin and Deſtroy me; I Reſt Aſſured that it will be my Fault if All does not Turn to my Advantage; And the Improvement of my Soul: What is there, then, That I Should Fear, O my God, and my Strength! At the very Time I am Aſſaulted with Temptations; That I am Labouring Under the Conflicts of Corrupt Nature; And that, With the Utmoſt Regret, I Reflect upon the Obligations that are Upon me, to Renounce and Bid Adieu to All the World that XI.

With

With more Freedom I May Follow Thee; Can I Even then find any Thing, any Other Friend or Assistant who is Both Able and Willing, to Turn all Things to my Advantage, as Thou Art, O my Jesus! my Redeemer! The Unbelieving Jews Have Offer'd Thee no Outrage which Thou Hast not Converted into A Torrent of Blessings to my Soul; The Most Bitter Instances of Their Malice, Thou Hast Chang'd them all into Sweet, and Refreshment; Thou Hast made this Water to Run out of the Stony Rocks; Thou Hast Calm'd these Turgid Mountains of this Inraged Sea, and Extracted Life Out of the very Bosom and the Jaws of Death: There is nothing Else, Therefore, That I Have to be Apprehensive and Affraid of, but my Self, Thou Eternal Charity, Dilate and Expand this Heart of Mine, that I May Cast my Self; with A Steddy Confidence and Assurance; With Love and with Resignation into this *Ocean* of *Mercy*, which Openeth its Bosom to me! That I may Dwell within the Fatherly Embraces of This Divine Providence, and Unbounded Love, which Still Governs and Directs me; That, *There*, I may Lodge my Soul to its Repose; That *There* I may Enjoy the Vision of my God; And be for Ever Taken up, and Possess'd of Him!

O Most

O Most Chaft and Pure, Virgin-Mother! Who Dispenseft Celestial Treasures! Whose Only Comfort and whose Life was Wrapt up In *The Lord*; And who, *By Him*, art Raised to That High Degree of Perfection and Glory Which, at this Present, Thou dost Enjoy; O Draw me up After Thee Into that Height of Bliss; Strengthen me In *His Love*, Since He is All my Hope and my Felicity.

Ye Blessed Spirits! Dissolv'd in the Delights of The *House of God!* Procure me Some Few Drops of Those *Celestial Waters*, to Be-dew this Barren Clay, This Dry and Steril Heart within me; So that Having once Tasted the Sweetness of Those *Rivers of Pleasure*, I may Never Cease to Aspire After the *Fountain Head*, 'Till, In the End, I may Enjoy the Perfect REFRESHINGS of it, with you, for Evermore, *Amen.*

THE

[redacted]

THE Twenty Fourth Instance OF THE SUFFERINGS OF The BLESSED JESUS.

CHAP. XXIV.

In The INGRATITUDE *Of The Jews.*

1 THere is Such A Connection, In the Nature of All Sins, that it would Seem as if Every Vice were The Original and Foundation of All Others! From Hence 'tis, that The Holy Penmen have Sometimes Objected Pride as The

The Spring and Motive of all Evils; And Sometimes they have Told us that it is REBELLION and DISOBEDIENCE: Some Will have it that They Proceed from the Principles of a Deordinate and Excessive *Self-Love*; Others that It is from an Envious Disposition; And Some, again, that it is from Ingratitude: * *St.* Bernard Represents it Under the Character of *This Last Vice*; Calling it, Κατ' ἐξοχῆν, " The *Enemy of the Soul*; *The* " *Annihilation of Merits*; *The Destruction of* " *Vertues*; The *Loss of All Graces*; *A Burning* " *Wind which Blasts and Dries up the Source of* " *Piety*, *The Dew of Mercy*, *and the Current of* " *All Holy and Divine Illapses and Communica-* " *tions*: After this Manner it is, that He Attributes all Other Evils to this Blackest Sin of Ingratitude: But, although the *Jews* were Guilty of Many Others, Every One of which Rendered them Obnoxious to the Wrath of God; most Certain 'tis, that this vile Guilt of Ingratitude, was One of the most Dangerous and fatal in the whole Catalogue, Since It was fortified by All The Rest; And Rendred them, at the same Time, More Odious, And the Pestilence of Their Malicious Wickedness the More Incurable: However it was, One may Aver This, as a Certain Truth, That It Caused, Our Blessed Saviour, for Many Years, Such Sorrow and Vexation, as Requir'd a most Invincible Patience to Withstand it.

* Serm. 15. In Cant.

II. It is an Easy Matter to Imagine, how Provoking 'tis to Receive Nothing but *Ill Treat-*

ment from Those whom we have Enriched with the Greatest Favours: The *Priests* and The *Chief* of The People, not only Testified an Ungrateful Resentment; But, Least it should be Imagin'd that they had any Complacency In the Charms of His Address, They Slandered and Reviled Him where-ever They Came; And Their Malicious Rage Boiled over In Proportion to the Endearing Sweetness of his Gracious Tenders to them: Others, who followed Him, In View of Some Temporal Profit, forsook Him, when He did not Answer the End of their Selfish Designs and Projects; As Those did, whom he had fed by a Miracle, *with five Barly Loaves, and Three Small Fishes:* For These Mistaken People, Projecting to Make Him King, under the Prospect of Leading an Incurious and Easy Life, Under his Reign, Left Him, when they Came to Hear Him Speak of A Celestial Bread He was to *Dispense unto the World.* Some of them, after He had Healed them of their Sickness and Diseases, did not So much as thank Him for the Charity, As 'tis Recorded of the *Nine Lepers*; Many, Even of Those who had followed Him, and Were Eye-Witnesses of his Perfections, Became the vilest of his Persecutors and Tormentors.

In Short, These Hardened Wretches, whom He had prevented with his Favours, After They had Received Him with the most Joyful Exultations, and Hosannahs; And Acknowledged Him, as the *Messias,*

Come

Come from God; After they had Sometimes wished only for the Blessed Opportunity, for the Cleansing of their Radicate Sores, to Touch but The Hem of his Garment; when they were Mixt, afterwards, with the Multitude, and Gathered together, from All Parts, about Him, Joyned themselves with his Enemies; Prefer'd A MURDERER Before Him; Demanded that He should be *Crucified*; And Conducted Him, Themselves, In Person, to the Place of Execution.

But, what Can never be Sufficiently Admired, is, that The *Blessed Jesus*, All this while, knowing their Intentions, and foreseeing their Ingratitude, Omitted not, for All That, to Inform Them In his Divine Truths, and to Bestow Thousands of Blessings upon them; Even So far as to Give Special Marks and Tokens of his Tenderness, to *that Traitour Judas*; And to Restore his Ear to *Malchus*, who Came to Apprehend Him, which St. *Peter* had Cut off under that Provocation.

The Civil Laws Affirm, that Ingratitude is A Lawful, and Sufficient Cause for Parents to Disinherit their Children; And for Masters to Stop the Wages of their Servants: It Destroys the very Principles of Habituated Friendship, after such a Manner, that they who are Reconciled, afterwards, together, Give no Other Reason for it, but that it is an Essential Part of Vertue to forget Injuries; and to do Good Even to those, who are the most Unworthy of it: For *There* III.

Can be No Excuse made for Ingratitude: The More One Endeavours to Justify it the more Provoking and Insupportable it Becomes; and the Best Excuse that can be Made, in This Case, is to Acknowledge that One has None at All! But whatsoever we do, Human Friendships are Ever Weaken'd by this hateful Vice; There is Nothing but the Divine Love, of the *Blessed Jesus*, Ardent in His Soul Towards Mankind, that Could Subsist, Much Less Increase, upon This Provoking Evil: For, This, so far from being Extinguish'd, by this Black Ingratitude of the *Jews*, or Changed into an Aversion and Hatred To Them, as is Usual Among Mankind, was still Kindled into a more Ardent Flame; And Instead of Shutting his Bowels against Them, Set open the Floods of His Mercy, and the Treasures of His Wisdom, and Made them Flow More plenteously, upon Them: And they who, Afterwards, Acknowledged Their fault, where Received with as Much Generosity and Bounty as if they Had Never been Stained with so Base and Black a Sin.

IV. But We, who are Born within the Pale of *Christ's Church*; Who are Foster'd up in The Arms of True Faith, and the Love of Jesus Christ; Who See the Wonderful Effects of His Almighty Power; Who Hear Those Divine Truths, by which he Has Enlighten'd us in *The Way to Heaven*; Who Can * *Draw Waters*, in plenty, *Out of the Wells of Salvation*, Are we Less Ingrateful than *The Jews* Were! We Reject all those Graces; We Run Giddily along, after the Deceitful Illusions of Earthly

* Isa. 12. 3.

Earthly Pleasures, with as Much Greedinesſ of Appetite, as if They were Solid, and Had a Foundation; And Live in an Entire Forgetfulneſs of what we Owe to God: And we Have the Preſumption to Appear, in This Deformed State, in the Very *Preſence* of the *Divine Majeſty*; We Converſe, with Him, in Prayer; And Dwell in His Houſe, with as Much Eaſineſs and Unconcern, as if we were of the Number of the Faithful and Undefiled: We have the Aſſurance to Enter into His Holy Temple, as if He ſaw Nothing, but what was pure and Good, in us; And we Tempt His Patience no Leſs, than Thoſe Ungrateful *Jews* did, who *Nail'd Him to The Croſs!*

Divines Teach that A Relapſe in Sin, is Much More Dangerous than the firſt Tranſgreſſion; Becauſe there is the Aggravation of Another Guilt, Even that of *Ingratitude*, Added to the firſt Fault that Has been forgiven us; What Excuſe, then, ſhall we Ever Make for Thoſe, we fall into, Every Day we Live, after Our Gracious God Has forgiven them A Thouſand Times!

If to This we add, the Evil Uſe we Make of Temporal Goods, which The Divine Providence and Goodneſs Has Entruſted us Withal, to *Merit* Heaven; But, which we So Often Proſtitute to the Purchaſe of Our Damnation; Our Contempt of God's Spiritual Favours; Our Neglect of the Divine Service; of God's Preventing Graces; Of

Improving Our Time; Of Answering to the Gracious Illapses of His Most Holy Spirit, Whilst we are so Wholly Taken up with the Cares of This World; And Our Corrupt Appetites and Passions, and Grossest Pleasures Have More Influence and Power Over us than The *Infinite Majesty*, *The Greatness*, *Truth*, *Eternity*, and *Glory*, of OUR MAKER, by whose Goodness we Live; And whose Just Indignation we Cannot Escape; Our Ingratitude, Will, at Last, Sink us into A Gulph of *Everlasting Misery* and *Perdition*: We shall Have no Hopes Left, but in The Infinite Charity of our Merciful *Redeemer*, who, forseeing the Hardness of our Hearts, was Willing to be Crucified for Ungrateful Mankind; And who is, Still, Ready to forget our Vile Ingratitude, if we do but Return to Him with A Sincere Heart; But Let us Remember, that this Divine Patience, which has Born with us so Long, May be Chang'd into A Just Wrath and Indignation; And that without it we must Have Perish'd Long ago.

V. The Mercy, Almighty God Makes use of in Respect to us, does not only furnish us with the most Comfortable and Joyful Contemplations; But it also Sets A Pattern, for Our Imitation, before Our Eyes, Teaching us, to do Good to those, who are Guilty of this Vile Sin against our Selves, that the Obligations we are Under, in Respect to The Blessed Jesus, upon This Account, Might Have More Influence upon us than Our own Natural

Natural Resentments: For this it is that He has Commanded us to Love Our Enemies: * For, *If you Love only Those*, Says He, *that Love you, what Thanks have ye? Even They, who fear no God, Love those who Love Them! And if ye do no Good but to them which do Good to you, what Great Matter is it? For, Sinners, also, do Even the Same! But Love, ye, your Enemies, and do Good, and Lend, Hoping for Nothing again; and, then, your Reward Will be Great; and ye shall be the Children of the Most High; For he is Kind to the Ungrateful and to the Wicked.* * St Luk. 6. 32, 33, 35.

The Very Heathens have Own'd that He who Refuses to Oblige an Ungrateful Person, does More Harm to Himself than the Other; Because He, then, Looses the *Merit* of *Doing Good*, which is Much more Precious than The Favour He Refuses: In doing *Good* To any One, we Cannot Make Him Worse; tho' it May So Happen Even that we May Make him Better: But, by Refusing One A Courtesy, we, always, Become Less Good; And, Because Another is Ungrateful, We won't by Generous; Nevertheless it is Certain that *True Vertue* does not Neglect to do Good; Because others do Evil.

If we Consider the Benefits and Favours we Receive from the Hands of God, Every Day we Live, Notwithstanding our Ingratitude to Him, we shall want no other Motives, to Oblige our Neighbour, whatever Ill use He may Make of it, In Respect to us: Besides that, to Act as Christians, *We must Only*

do Good to Mankind out of Love to God, without Expecting any Return, or Recompence from Them: As Man is Apt Easily to forget The Good One does Him, It's Loosing the Efficacy and Vertue of the Good Offices we do, if we Undertake them for Man's Sake: This made *The Wiseman* Say, that, * *The Faith of an Ungrateful Man is Like to the Ice of Winter: Because it Melts, and Passes as an Useless Water:* Because, so Soon as He is out of want, He forgets His Benefactor, and Attributes to Himself The Good he Has Received from Another, According to the Words of the Son of *Syrach*, where He Observes that † *The Wicked Man Looks on the Goods as his own for which he has Given Surety; And the Ungrateful Wretch abandons Him that has Delivered him.*

* Wisd. 16.

† Wisd. 29.

‖ *He Torments himself*, Says that Heathen Moralist, by the Benefits *he has Received:* He hates the Good that has been done him, and Lessens the Value of it, because he is to Ballance the Account, and Make A Proportionate Return: But in this he Only Torments himself; And his Unworthiness, Still, heightens and Inhances the Merit of his Benefactor: Malice Ever Drinks up the Greatest part of his Poison; But this Poison is not Like that of Serpents; Those Creatures Carry their Venom to Transfuse it into Others; And it is not in the Least Infectious or fatal to Themselves; Whereas the Ungrateful Misereant is Envenom'd, and Tormented by his Own Ingratitude.

‖ Sen. de. Benef.

Since

Since the Example of God, and Human Reason Induce us to do Good Offices to the Ungrateful; It Suffices, to add, here, that there is Scarce *Any Thing*, in this World, More Worthy of a *Sacred Æmulation*, than that Noble Principle, in the Soul, which Prompts a Man to Render Good for Evil; By Reason of Those Inward Graces with which God Almighty Ever does Enrich Those withal who Suffer Evil in Doing Good; And who do not Withdraw Their Hand from Works of Charity; Altho' there are Such Wretches in the World, who are So Sordid as not to Acknowledge Them. God Give you Grace to Make A Happy Improvement of what I Say, and you'll find it to be Fact.

A

Divine Contemplation,

Upon The INGRATITUDE *of The Jews.*

I. IS it Possible, O my Dear Redeemer! that there should be no kind of Affliction, which Thou wouldst not Undergo; And, that, after so Much Sorrow as thou hast Endured, for our Sakes, Thou shouldst, Still, Bear with the Ungrateful Treatments of A Wicked World, so far as to Suffer Them to Make use of Thy Blessings, to Provoke Thee! Blessed be That Exceeding Love which Disposed Thee to Bear with Such Inexcusable Ingratitude! Permit me, Most Dear Lord, to Pry into This Mysterious Instance of thy Love! There was Never Soul More Sensible of This Odious Guilt! Yet Nevertheless, A Sin of this Monstrous Nature, which Ought to Have Drain'd *The Fountain* of Thy Blessings, has Let it Out, to Gush with A More Impetuous Torrent upon Those Very Creatures who Reject Them! I Adore thy Goodness, O Thou God

God of Bowels and Compassion! Alas! Who has any Claim or Title to our Love, Our Praises, Our Adoration, Our Devoted Services, If Thou hast not, who art so Rich In Love, In Mercy, In Blessings, In Patience, and Forbearance! Tis Impossible to Limit The Extent of it, or to Exhaust its Treasures.

Thou Seest, O Lord, the Extreme Ingratitude, by which Mankind Strives and Labours to Depreciate thy Favours; And, for Such a Numberless Accumulation of thy Blessings, to Make thee no Return, but In Injuries, Contempt, and Torments, and A *Cruel Death!* The Sick, whom Thou Hast Healed; And The Ignorant, whom Thou Hast Instructed, Rise up against Thee; And *This Fountain of Goodness* is not Dried up! *And This Furnace of Love* is not Extinguish'd; But, so far from Depriving These Ungrateful Sinners of The Hopes of Receiving New Favours, Thou Still dost open thine Arms, and Tender thy Mercys, Every Day, unto Them.

What Can they Wish for More, when They Enjoy Thee, O *Thou Ever-flowing Source of all Good!* With what Pretence Can They Cover Their Ingratitude, when They Reject Thee! When they have Nothing to Eat, Thou Feedest Them; If they want any thing, thou dost only Stay 'till they ask, that thou Mayst Grant it to Them: In Thee They find Both the Physician and the Cure for Their Soul and Body; Thou Layest The Storms;

Storms; Thou Driveſt the Devils out of the Poſſeſs'd; Thou Healeſt the Sick; Thou Raiſeſt The Dead; Thou Informeſt Wandering Souls in Their way to Heaven; Thou Forgiveſt Sin; And Thou Takeſt the Iniquity and pain of it upon Thy Self.

II. The Queen of the *South*, Might Have Said to Thee, with Much more Reaſon Than to *Solomon*, * *Happy are thy Men; Happy are Theſe thy Servants which Stand Continually Before thee, and that Hear thy Wiſdom: Becauſe the Lord Loved* Iſrael, *for Ever, Therefore made He Thee King, to do Judgment and Juſtice.* This Queen had only ſeen, In *Solomon*, Exterior and Limited Qualifications, and Accompliſhments which She ſo Admired; But ſhe would have found, in THEE, an *Almighty Power*, The Wiſdom *of A God*, and Moſt Divine Love: And, if The Anointing *Solomon* King over *Iſrael*, was ſo Remarkable an Inſtance of The peculiar Favour of God, Towards That People; How Infinitely More Happy Ought They to Have Eſteem'd Themſelves, in Having THEE, for Their King and God!

* 1. King. 10. 8, 9.

And yet Theſe Ungrateful Obſtinates, Have no Senſe of this Happineſs; They Rather Chooſe the moſt deſpicable and Sordid Enjoyments of The World, than thy Favours; And even than Thy Self; They Never Ceaſe to perſue and Perſecute Thee; And Won't be Satisfied 'till They Rob Thee of thy Life! Their Streets, Their Houſes, Their whole Country are Still Flowing with Thy Bleſſings,

Blessings, and they Cannot Endure Thee! Why dost thou not Take away their Life, Their Health, and all Those other Blessings They have Received at Thy Hands, O My God! Since they Have no Sense of Them; And are so Infatuate and Blind as to Despise Them! Let me, at the Same Time, Adore Thy Bounty, which has Disposed Thee to Suffer Their Rebukes, and to Undergo Those Sorrows that were Conceived In thee, upon their Account: Open thy Heart unto me, *O Merciful Father*! And Let This Fountain of Thy Love pour down upon my Soul; Let thy Light Quicken and Shine in There; That I may Behold the Baseness and Deformity of my own Ingratitude, by Comparing it with the Excess of Thy Charity.

O How True is That Expression, of Thine, O Lord! That, They who will not Receive Thee; Thee, who, *In the Name of the Father*, art Come unto them, *Full of Grace and Truth*; will Receive Another, with Open Arms, who will Come *In his Own Name*, to Seduce and Ruin them: Since They Set themselves up against Thee; and Confide more In the Delusions of the World, than thy Never-failing Promises; And the Accomplishment of their Carnal Appetites, than the Communication of Thy Divine Truths; They Will meet Eternal Death, In the midst of those Gracious Tenders of Eternal Life, which Thou dost Bring unto them: Thou Beholdest Their Iniquity, and art sensibly Touch'd with it, whilst They are Perishing

In

In Peace, and fatal Security! Let that Infinite, Ineffable Charity, of Thine, be Blessed, Praised, and Glorify'd for Ever!

III. But, Alas! O my Lord! Whilst I am amazed at thy Wonderful Forbearance, In Suffering the Ingratitude of the *Jews*, have I not Reason to Bewail my past and present Miseries; And to Lay Open All those Old Canker'd Sores before Thee, which have so Often Broke out, and which Thou, Alone, Canst Cure? Although it was not my Happiness to See Thee, In Thy Mortal Flesh, I take All Those Mighty Works, Thou hast Transacted In the World, as An Inestimable Treasure of Divine and Spiritual Riches: For Thou art Born, for my Single Soul, as well as for the Salvation of the Rest of Mankind; And, As Thy Person is of Infinite Dignity and Value, The Vertue of thy Glorious Operations can never be Exhausted; I find In All Thy Actions, Thy Words, and In Thy Merits, My Support, My Directions, My Food, and My Life: This is The Foundation of My Faith and Hope; And that Great Assurance In what I do not, at present, see before mine Eyes.

Behold Thy Gracious Gifts, unto me, O my God! But if I Examine my own Heart, and Consider what a poor Return I make, How shall I presume to Appear In thy Presence! What Ought I not to Fear, O Lord! were thy Mercies to Rise up against me! Should Thy Continual Favours Impeach me; Should

Should All the Instances of Thy Bounty and Goodness Arise to Confound me; And Those very Graces, which thou hast prepar'd as A Cure and Balsam to my Soul, which by my own Ingratitude and Folly have been perverted, and become a Fatal Draught unto me! What Returns of Duty and Acknowledgement have I paid Thee with my Eyes, What Praises with my Tongue, what Service with my Ears, my whole Body, my Understanding, my Will my Memory, my Soul, and Every Faculty of my Being! What Returns of Acknowledgment and Praise have I Ever made, for the Glory of The Heavens, The Earth, The Elements, Every Created Being, for my Self, my Life, and All the Temporal Blessings Thou hast Dispensed to me, and to the World! Or Rather when have I not Made Use of Them, to thy Great Offence, and that with the most provoking Ingratitude and Malice!

Oh! When I Consider that vast Multitude of Spiritual Blessings, which Thou hast Graciously Vouchsafed unto me, and which thou hast promised me, which I have Lost, and Neglected; what Ought I not to Fear! O my God! what will Become of me, if Thou should'st Enter Into Judgment with me! Yea where should I be Now, had'st thou not Looked upon me with the Same Mercy, which Led Thee on to die for Ungrateful Sinners.

When

When Thou haſt Viſited me, by the Sweetneſs of Thy Preſence; when my Soul has been Charmed with the Graces of Thy Beauty, when Every Thing that kept me at a Diſtance from Thee, became Inſupportable Unto it; when with Such Uneaſineſs it Underwent the pain, which the mere Neceſſity of providing for human Nature, Laid upon it; what Occaſion Could it find In Thee, my Deareſt Lord, to Abandon thee So Soon; ſo Entirely to forget Thee; To Engage itſelf In Other Loves, and to Renounce thy Doctrines, after having Relliſh'd Them with ſo pure a Joy?

Thou Could'ſt Looſe nothing of thy Charms, O Eternal Charmer, When I Fled from Thee! And what I ſo Eagerly purſued, that was not Of Thee, Ceaſed not to be Vile and Periſhable! What Reaſon, then, Could move me to to Quit my God for Them? For I could never find, In Them, thoſe pure Delights, after having Taſted Them In thy Preſence.

When, afterwards, being ſmote with a Senſe of my Wanderings, I have Return'd to Thee, with what Tenderneſs haſt Thou Received me! With what Comforts haſt thou Refreſh'd me; with what Generous Condeſcention Pardon'd and Forgiven me! Then Knew I that Thou Wert my Only Refuge; And that I never Could be Saved but by Siding with Thee: What then have I found, Since, In the Creatures, who have Separated me

me from Thee! That should Move me, any More, to Offend thee by Running after Them: What A Wretched Creature Am I, O my God!

But my Misery will appear Much Greater, if, Besides these Blessings which are Common to me and the World, I Call to Mind The Particular Grace I have Received from thee; the Sins thou Hast Obliterated and forgiven me; the Temptations, thou Hast Enabled me to Overcome; The Many Dangers from which Thou Hast Deliver'd me; And when I Set the Catalogue, before Thee, of All those Instances of Ingratitude, in which I have Sinned, and am fallen so Low, after all those Favours; My Heart is so pierc'd with Grief and Confusion, that I Look upon all the Other Miseries of my Life as Nothing:
* *Against Thee Only have I Sinned, O my God!* * Ps. 51.
Because I Ought to Have Loved thee alone 4.
† *I have done Evil In thy Presence*; And I do † Ibm.
heartily Confess it Before all the World, that Thy Mercy may Triumph over my Ingratitude: ‖ *I have been Conceiv'd in Sin*, and upon ‖ Ibm.
this Account it is that I am So prone to Commit it, and Thou So Ready to forgive it.
* *Thou hast Loved Truth*; Thou Hast Ever * Ibm.
Fullfill'd thy Promises, and I do not Cease, by New Transgression, to Violate those Vows, unto a Better Life, that I have Made So often: † *Thou hast Reveal'd to me the Secrets* † Ibm.
of thy Divine Wisdom, which has found Out the Means to Raise me, by thy Sorrows and Humiliations; To *Enrich* me by *Thy Merits*;

And to Cancel the Black List of my Ingratitude by thy Sufferings: Therefore the Only Hopes, that I Have Left, are, That Thou wouldst * *Water me with Hyssop, and I shall be Clean; That thou Wilt Wash me, and I shall be Whiter than Snow; That thou Wilt Fill my Soul with Joy and Gladness, that the Bones which thou hast Broken may Rejoyce.*

* Ibm.

☞ O Powerful Queen of Heaven! To Whom Grace was Never Useless, and who, by Thy Faith, Hast Acquir'd an Immense Treasure of Heavenly Riches: It is God's Holy Will that Thou Shouldst be Our Refuge; Assist me; Succour An Ungrateful Sinner, who is Unworthy of The Least of God's Mercys! O Let me Enter Into The House, and Friendship of OUR LORD, who Hast made you so Perfect; And Let me Never Be Forgetful of His Mercies!

Ye Happy Denizens of Heaven, Enrich'd with Divine Graces, with the Assurance that ye shall Never Loose Them; Take Compassion of The Fleeting Inconstancy and Vicissitude of the Dangers with Which we, Poor Mortals, are Surrounded, In This Place of Miseries: Procure me the Blessed Disposition, to Have Continually Before my Eyes the Happiness you Enjoy, And an Ardent Flame and Desire after it; So that, Being Entirely Weaned from the Sweets of this World, I may be Ever Breathing after Those Joyes and that Bliss which Renders you Happy to Everlasting. *Amen.*

THE

THE Twenty Fourth Instance OF THE SUFFERINGS OF Our Blessed Saviour.

CHAP. XXIV.

In The Ardour with which He Longed for his Bitter Passion, And The Terrours of His Humanity Thereupon.

THE Son of God, by Taking Our Nature upon Him, Chiefly proposed Three Things, as The End and Purpose of All his Sufferings; *viz. The Glory of God his Father*, The *Establishment* of *The Law of Grace*; And

The Redemption of Mankind: But, Because The Glory, *of God The Father*, by This *Sacrifice* of *Jesus Christ*, was to be made Known to the Whole *Universe*; *The Law of Grace*, He had Promulg'd, was to be Confirmed by his *Passion*; And The *Redemption* of The World to be fulfill'd by the shedding of his Blood; The desire he had, to See his Father Glorified; The New Law Establish'd; And Mankind Redeemed, was So Ardent, that, One May Say, without Stretching upon the Matter, That This Impetus of his Love Over-ballanc'd All the Miseries He was to Undergo.

The *Zeal of The House of God*, with which The *Immaculate Lamb* was *Devoured*, was Ever pressing upon his Righteous Soul, to finish his Work; Represented to Him, Continually, what He had to Undergo, and Depriv'd Him of All Rest: It's true, that Our Blessed Saviour would have it to be Thus; That those Aggravating Circumstances of the Length and Severity of his Sufferings, Might Render Them the more full of Grace and Merit, upon Our Account: But, Besides this, He would Intimate to us, *Hereby*, that Such a Painful Death, far from being the Produce of Chance, or of the mere Malice of Man, proceeded from the Counsels of A most PROFOUND WISDOM; And from a CHARITY which Could not be Patient of any Delay.

For

For we are not to Judge of the *Length* of *Our Blessed Saviour's Sufferings*, by the mere Article of his Passion, which Lasted Only about Twenty Hours: He did not only, THEN, feel the Pain and Ignominy of his Shameful Passion; For They were Present to him, during the whole Course of his Life, And his Sacred Humanity was Continually taken up and Oppressed with Them.

He Testified the Desire, and Apprehensions of his Soul, upon this Subject, by Those Expressions, of his, So full of Tenderness and Love for us, * *There is a Baptism*, Says he, *with which I must be Baptized*; *And O How am I Straitned till it be Accomplished!* He, also, Call'd his Passion a Baptism, when he ask'd The Sons of *Zebedee*, who Solicited for the first Places in his Kingdom, whether † *They Were able to Drink the Cup that he should Drink of*; *and to be Baptized with the Baptism that he was to be Baptized with:* If These Terms of CUP, and BAPTISM, Represent any Thing Agreeable; It is Because the Love of Our Blessed Saviour, Could find no Comfort, but in That Cup, and in That Bath of Blood, with which he was to Wash off Our Iniquitys.

* *St.* Luke 12. 50.

†† *St.* Mat. 20. 22.

The Holy Scripture is full of the High Eulogies of Praise it Gives to the Richness of *That Precious Blood:* It Calls it, || *The Blood of the New Testament*, In which we shall be purified, and which Intercedes for us before Almighty God; And Says, that It is by

|| *St.* Mat. 26. 28.

* Heb. 9. 12. * THIS BLOOD *that The High Priest is Enter'd Into The Holy of Holies; That we are Reconciled to Almighty God; That we Obtain Remission of Sins*; That, As, † *In The Ancient Law, Sin was not Remitted without Effusion of Blood; so We, also, do not obtain The New Covenant of Forgiveness, but by the Shedding the Blood of the Immaculate Lamb of God:* And, As The Blessed Jesus would be Baptized In the *Jordan*, thereby to Communicate Vertue to the Waters of Sanctifying Our Souls; He would, also, be Wash'd In his Blood, to Inform us, That This Precious Blood, of his, is not the Sign of Wrath and of Death, But A *Flowing Fountain* of *Life* and *Grace*.

† Ibm. v. 22.

III. When He Healed The Sick; When He Gave Sight to The Blind, Speech to The Dumb, Life unto The Dead; And Saw The People filled with *Joy* and *Admiration*, He Concluded that All The Nations of The World, Would Receive, In Souls, by the Efficacy of His Blood, after a Manner, altogether Spiritual, The Graces, which So Small a Number of Persons, Received In the Body; And, his Tender Heart panted, with a Holy Impatience, that These Divine and Heavenly Communications Might be Imparted to All The World: He Spoke of it Continually, and upon All Occasions, Because, his Compassionate Soul was Totally and Entirely taken up with it.

When He Reflected upon the Ingratitude of the *Jews*, He foretold that The *Gentiles* would

would Succeed to the Enjoyment of Those Gracious Tenders which They had Rejected: And when the Subject of Eating and Drinking was a foot, He Generally touch'd upon the Communication of his Body and Blood, which was to Give Life to the World: Sometimes He Discourſed of *Sheep, He would Unite Into his Sheep-fold, from all Quarters of the Univerſe*; Other whiles of *Thoſe who would Come from The* Eaſt, *and from The* Weſt, *to Dine at His Table:* He Exhorted his Diſciples to Look up; to *Caſt their Eyes upon The Field Already In Bloſſom, and Ready for The Harveſt:* He Aſſured Them, that When He Should be Lifted up, upon The Croſs, He would Draw All to Him; and He Omitted No Occaſion to Teſtifie His *Extreme Deſire* and *Eagerneſs* for *Our Salvation.*

Thus, When He ſaid * *I am Come to Bring Fire upon Earth*; *And what do I deſire, But that it ſhould Burn?* He Knew, very Well, that This Fire Could not be Kindled but by the *Baptiſm of His Blood?* And Seeing *This Baptiſm* Deferred, He Said, with a Sigh, *How am I Straitned till it be Accompliſh'd!* What *Zeal*, What *Love*, What *Tenderneſs* did This Expreſs! What is it that Bewitches Men, That They ſhould Ever Ceaſe to Converſe with A God ſo Infinitely Endearing, A Friend ſo Tender, And ſo Indulgent a Father, who, without Any Regard to Himſelf, is ſo Entirely taken up about Our Neceſſities and Salvation! IV.

Behold, here, the Test by which we may Convince ourselves, whether we are near to God, or at Distance from Him; And whether Our Projections are Disinteressed and pure: For That Flame, which was Kindled In his Charitable Soul, for the Accomplishment of Our Salvation, Rendred Every Moment Painful and Vexatious to him, that He had to Wait for it, although there was not an Hour, of that *Precious Life*, of His, which was not full of the *Treasure* of *Infinite Merits* upon Our Account: This Thought Continually press'd upon Him; And We, for whose Sake He Underwent, and Laboured through All These Anguishes, We Let Ourselves Loose, to be Transported with Evil Appetites, and Desires entirely, The Reverse of His, tho' we know how Displeasing They are to Him; And that it was to Tear away this Filth from Our Hearts, that He, So Voluntarily; Gave Himself up to Suffer Death: I Dare be Bold to Say, that, If the Greatest Part of Mankind, were but to look Back, and Cast their Eyes upon their Past Life, they would have much ado, to find, In the Compass of so many Years, so much as but One Single Day, In which They have Labour'd for Their Eternal Salvation, with That Eagerness and Warmth of Application, as They have Spent All their Time In the pursuit after That which Only Leads to the Perdition of their Souls.

V. How Strangely Stupid and Infatuate are They who Procvastinate and put off All their Concern

Concern about their Future, and Eternal State, Unto the Last Moments of their Life! And who Imagine, that amidst the Terrours of God's Judgments, before whose Dread Tribunal they shall soon Appear; In View of the Torments of The Damn'd before their Eyes, Into which They are Ready to Sink, and be, for Ever, *Gnashing their Teeth*; In the very Pangs of Death, and the Struggles Between Soul and Body upon a Dissolution; They Can Possibly Apply themselves Effectually about the Great Concern of Their Salvation! How Can They, In the very Article of Death, Transform their Hearts Into the Love of Him, whom They Neglected and Despised All Their Life; and Yet Without this Qualification They Never can be Saved! The *Blessed Jesus, The Faithful Friend of Our Souls*, was far from Acting after This Manner: He had fix'd upon an Hour In which He was to Die for us; He Employ'd his Thoughts upon it Every Moment; And He, In a Manner, Acted the Catastrophe, and Dy'd Every Day He Lived, Because the Time did not Fly fast Enough, nor his Hour Approach: So that We are no Less Oblig'd to Him for His Gracious Will, and Purpose, that He had, to Die for us, than for the Actual Engagement In the Dismal Tragedy it self: We Ought to Look upon the Passionate Concern, He had, and the Desires with which his Charitable Soul was Inflam'd, as So Many Solemnities of Bitter Death Transacted and Undergone: For He Continually Renewed the Remembrance, In Himself,

Himſelf, and the Deſire of *That Bath of Blood* Into which He was to be Plunged for The Salvation of Mankind.

VI. This Deſire, of His, to Undergo the Agonies of The Croſs, Brought, upon Him, another Affliction, Beſides, what has been already Mentioned: And that was, The Natural Dread, and Continual Apprehenſion and Senſe of Thoſe Painful Agonies He was to Suffer: The ſame Love which preſſed Him forward to chooſe this Bitter Portion, Repreſented it Continually Before his Eyes; And Notwithſtanding All the Horrours, the Human Nature Suſtained under Theſe Diſmal Apprehenſions, He, Ardently Deſired that *The Work might be Fulfilled.*

Men of Bravery and Courage, altho' They know The Danger, yet They don't flinch from the moſt Deſperate Attacks, whereby they may Celebrate their Valour; And tho' they Cannot but be Subject to the Common Shocks of Human Nature, When They Draw The Sword; yet This does not prevent Their Gallant and Heroick Acquiſitions; nor hinder 'em from Gaining Glorious Victory, after They have Stifled All Impreſſions of Fear within them; which does not Long Influence them: Whereas The Sacred Humanity, of the *Bleſſed Jeſus*, was Never free from Theſe Terrible Idea's; For, He was, all his Life Time, Divided, as one may ſay, Between the Dread of his Bitter Paſſion,

Passion, which He Could See into, Even to the Most Minute Circumstances; And the Eagerness of His Desire to Finish that Great Work of Our Salvation, By The Sacrifice, of Himself, upon the Cross! This Made him Say, after, He had Complain'd of the Delay of This *Bloody Baptism*, * *I am not Come to Send Peace, On Earth, But a Sword*; To Retrench Every Thing That Would Mitigate my Pain; And to Encounter, Amidst Sorrows, and The Most Ignominious Treatment, with A Cruel Death: † I am Come to *Send Fire On the Earth*; *And What Will I, if it be Already Kindled!* And Increase, in The Heart of Men, By The Endeavours They'l Make Use of to Oppose Every Thing, That Can Deprive Them of *The True Riches*; They Will Also Follow The Steps That I Have Trac'd out for Them; And They Will Testifie Their Love to Me, After The Same Manner, as I Have Express'd Mine to Them.

* St. Mat. 10. 34.

† St. Luk. 12. 49.

VII. Behold here A most Excellent Instruction for the True Servants of God, who from the Inward Impulses they Receive from the Holy Ghost, are Mov'd to Undertake Great Matters, Grieve to find Themselves Retarded by the Frailty and Infirmities of Human Nature: The Gracious Lord, who would Raise up A Noble Structure, on So Weak A Foundation, has Ordain'd, That Natural Infirmity, to which The Will does not Consent, Cannot Hurt the Perfection of Love; But Sometimes is Even Instrumental to

Augment

Augment it; Because the Sense of Human Misery, Sorrows and Afflictions, So Long as the Soul Preserves its Vigour, Makes us to Breath more Ardently after the *Liberty of The Children of God*; And to Desire, Every Moment, to be able, without Obstruction, to Give Our Selves to *Him*, as He has Sacrific'd Himself for us.

When A Faithful Soul, Notwithstanding the Apprehensions of Fraile Nature, Has Taken a Resolution to Fulfil the Purposes of Almighty God; And Constantly Perseveres in it, as much as the Weakness of Human Infirmitys Will permit; These Endeavours of His Love are Most Agreeable to His Redeemer; His Encounters are most Glorious; And his Faithfulness, and Constancy Carry Great Reward with Them, in the Sight of God: And the Soul never Acquires a more Glorious Victory Under the Divine Author and Captain of Our Salvation, Than when Nature is Oppress'd.

AN ESSAY ON *The* Transfiguration *of The* BLESSED JESUS.

THE *Terrour*, and The Longing Desire, Which The Son of God had to Suffer, Appear'd Manifestly in the Transfiguration; In which He would Communicate, to Those that Love Him, and were to Suffer for his Truth, A Glimpse of that Glory which He had Prepared for Them: For, Eight Days after He had Revealed to his Disciples, that the Royal Passage of the Cross, was That by which he Himself was First to Lead the Way; And that he would not Own Any for His, but only Those who would *Take up the Cross and Follow Him*; Burning with A Desire of Being Soon Fasten'd to it, he Transfigur'd Him- I.

Himself, before them, to Dilate and Ravish their Souls with A Glimmering of his Glory, and give Them A Taſt, Beforehand, of Thoſe RICHES That Lie Hidden in The Croſs!

He Choſe Three of his Diſciples for Witneſſes of *This Myſtery*; *James*, who was to be the Firſt who Should Suffer Martyrdom; *Peter*, who was to Die upon a Croſs; And *John*, who, after He had Seen His Bleſſed Maſter Expire upon it, was only to Live by Pure Love: He Retired, with them, upon Mount *Thabor*; And, as Soon as He Arrived Thither, He Began his Devotions, to Inform us, that there is More Force and Efficacy in This Duty, to Enable us to Bear the Croſs, than there is Weakneſs, in the Heart of Man, to fear it; That Prayer Purifies Our Love, And Renders the Terreſtrial Man, Altogether Spiritual and Cæleſtial.

Our Bleſſed Saviour, in the Midſt of This Holy Performance, Suffer'd A Glympſe of the Glory of His Soul to Expand Itſelf, and Spread all over His Sacred Body, for Some Time, which, Till then, he Had Conceal'd, in Order to Qualify Himſelf for his Bitter Paſſion: * *His Face appear'd Brighter than the Sun; and His Garments Became Whiter than Snow:* If A Mortal Body is Capable of So Great a Luſtre, what will the Glory of the Soul be, which has Lived upon the Earth, in the Continual Practice of the *Divine Love!*

* *St.* Mat. 17. 2.

They

They Beheld, on Each Side, of Him, *Moses* and *Elias*, whom he had Chosen, among all the Saints of the Old Law, to be The Witnesses of his Love, and Sufferings: He made Choice of *Elias*, who, after he had been Persecuted, all his Life-time, by Wicked Men, for the Cause of God, was Carried up to Heaven, in a Fiery Chariot, to Inform all Those, who Suffer Persecution for God's Sake, that they will only find an End to their Afflictions, and True Comfort, in the *Flame* of *Divine Love*, which alone Can Raise their Souls above all the Miseries and Troubles of this Painful Life; And he Fix'd also upon *Moses*, on this Occasion, who, being Accustomed to *Converse Familiarly with God*, and to Live *In His Presence*, Despised the Delights of The House of *Pharaoh*, and Chose Rather to be Afflicted with the People of God, than to Enjoy the Pleasures of a Court, So Licentious and Corrupted. II.

See, Here, what the Love of God Operates in A Faithful Soul; How, by Degrees, it, Insensibly, Disgusts it to the Tast of Every Thing that Would Attach it to This World, and Never Failes, by Sufferings, to Purifie and Refine it.

The Blessed Jesus, then, Being placed Thus, Between Those Two Faithful Lovers of *The Cross*, who Can Express their Sentiments, when they Saw HIM, Cloathed with Our Flesh whom They had So Ardently Desired! III.

ſired! They Beheld the Beauty of his Viſage with Their Own Eyes; And, with The Eyes of Faith, The Purity and Beatitude of His Soul, Flaming with Love; And Full of *The Treaſures of Wiſdom*, And The Knowledge of A God!

But, tho' They were Charm'd with the Wonders They Diſcover'd in Him; They Talk'd to Him On no Other Subject but that *Exceſs of Paſſion he was to Undergo in* Jeruſalem; Being perſwaded that They Could not Speak to him, upon any Thing More Agreeable; and as The Bleſſed Jeſus Himſelf, Often Entertained his Diſciples, with Diſcourſes about the Opprobrious Injuries he Should Meet with, and upon *His Croſs*, which were The Object of His moſt Ardent Deſires; So Theſe Two Prophets, Raviſh'd with His Outward Beautys, and Inward Amazing Qualifications, and his Stupendous Charity, Talk'd of Nothing to Him but The Thorns with which He was to be Crowned, The Stripes and Gaſhes with which His Sacred Body was to be Defaced, The Opprobrious Revilings with which He was to be Inſulted, The Tears of Sweat and Blood He was to Shed, and all the Other Bitter Torments he was to Undergo, and the Almighty Victory and Triumph of his Love in the Death, and Sacrifice of Himſelf, upon the Croſs.

They Obſerv'd the Eagerneſs of his Heart after this Mighty Work; And the perfect Submiſſion

Submission of His *Sacred Humanity* to The *Will* of His *Eternal Father*: They Knew the Blessed Jesus had Call'd Them to Him, To Moderate, in Some Measure, the Ardour which Devour'd Him, by Conversing with Them; For, His Disciples were not, as yet, Capable of Comprehending So Great A Mystery: Behold, what was the Subject of That Entertainment, after which The Blessed Jesus Dismist *Moses*, and *Elias*, full of Joy and Comfort.

There are, here, Two Things to be Consider'd. First, The Voice of *The Eternal Father*, which was Heard in the Clouds, Uttering these Words, * *This is my Beloved Son, in whom, alone, I am Well-pleased; Hear ye him*: By This, *The Eternal Father* Declared, not only that He Approved the Undertakings of his Son, and the Love He Bare Towards Mankind; But, also, that no Man will be Acceptable to *God the Father*, Unless He Listens to the Doctrine, and Follows the Example of Our Lord, and Saviour Jesus Christ; For, as, in Giving us his Son, He has given us all Things in him; Here it is, that we Ought to Look for, and Expect Our Relief, in all Our Necessities; And, Look upon Him, at the Same Time, as the Attonement for all Our Sins, and the Pattern of Our Vertues: Our Blessed Saviour has Told us, also, that * *If We do not Remain in Him, we Can Bring Forth no Fruit, which Can be Acceptable to His Father*: Alas! How many Unhappy Souls

IV.

* St. Mat. 17. 5.

* St. John. 15. 4.

 are

are there who do not *Please God*, Because they do not Approach him *In* and *Thro' Jesus Christ!* What is not in Him, Cannot, Be *Well-pleasing* to His *Eternal Father*, to whom Nothing Can be Acceptable but thro' Him; Who only Approves those Efforts of the Soul, those Faculties of Good Intention and Design, and those Works that are Quadrate and Conformable to Those of the Blessed Jesus, And who Rejects All those whom He Deems Unworthy of Him. Let us therefore Listen to the Voice of His Well Beloved, and shut our Ears, and be Deaf to All the Rest!

V. We must Observe, In the Second Place, that when the Blessed Jesus Descended from the Mountain, *He* * *Charged his Apostles not to tell, Any One, what They had seen, Until the* SON OF MAN *Should be Risen from The Dead*; Because The World was not Able, and, without a Great Experience of Divine Matters, They Could not be supposed Capable to Comprehend, as One Ought, this *Mysterious Operation* of the *Divine Love:* Our Blessed Saviour told *Ananias*, Speaking of St. *Paul*, † *I'll Shew Him, How much He must Suffer for my Name-sake*: He Had not, as yet Discover'd This Unto him, altho', he was Converted; This Secret was Reserv'd to be Revealed to him *In Heaven, In his Extatick Vision, when He was Caught up Into the Third Region*, from whence He Return'd, so full of *Light*, and *Love*, that, after He had Written

* St. Mat. 17. 9.

† Acts 9. 16.

Written ‖ *That He had Heard Unspeakable Words, which It is not Lawful for a Man to Utter*, He Concludes, That He Only Knows * JESUS CHRIST, *and* HIM *Crucified*: In Effect, He Thought of Nothing more, after That, But of Heightning his Love to God, and Suffering for his Sake; And the Last was as Familiar, to him, as the Other.

‖ 2 Cor. 12. 4.

* 1 Cor. 2. 2.

Hereby We are given to Understand, why, after The *Fall* of the *First Man*; God Almighty did not think fit to Give, at Least, to his *Faithful Servants*, Any Setled State of Peace, Here Below; But Decreed that they should Rub through this State of Life, with Much Tribulation: For, as The Divine Goodness Orders All Things for the Happiness of his *Elect*; And that, Even the Government of *The Universe*, is Subordinate to The *Predestination* of *Saints*, who are, In This World, as in a Seminary of Divine Wisdom, and in a Continual Exercise of Divine Love: He has Cover'd The Earth, with Such a Deluge of Miseries, that They Can find Neither Rest Nor Security; but Only in *the Arke*, which is *Jesus Christ*: It's This Asylum They Retire to; And Taste, In Secret, That Charming Peace, which *The World* knows Nothing of, And whose Expectation Swallows up all Apprehension and Fear of Tribulations, and The Desires of Worldly Vanities.

Upon This Account it was, that the Blessed Jesus, after He had Spent Thirty Years in a Continual Bitterness of Sorrow, was pleased to Discover, to These Three of his Disciples, The *Mysteries* of his *Love*, and *his Cross*; that is, The Solid Glory, That Secred, Inward Peace, which He has Concealed in it, and Reserves for Those that Truly serve and Follow Him: But, He Would not Suffer Those Graces to become Publick, Till Mankind, Better Instructed In *Divine Truths*, fortified by the Doctrine of *His Resurrection*, and Confirm'd by The Communication of The Holy Ghost, should be Capable of Receiving Such Important Mysteries.

VI. Don't Expect, therefore, O Christian Soul, the End, or Softening of Thy Troubles, Whilst Thou art Sojourning in this Wicked World: It's not the place of thy Rest: The Happiness of the *Elect*, upon whose Account Almighty God Preserves This World, In Being, is, to find no Joy in it; And, above all Things, to be afraid to be Wedded to it, by taking Notice, that Those, who will place their Happiness In Any Thing, *Abstracted from Christ*, meet with Nothing but Sorrow and Vexation of Spirit: Seek therefore, thy Consolation and Peace, When Thou art In Trouble, where it is to be found, That is to Say, In The Love of God, and Communication with *Jesus Christ!* Then Will you

you Experience That Great Truth, which Made Such an Impression upon the * Holy Father, after his Conversion, that it is Inexpressibly Delightful to Deprive ones Self of the Pleasures of this World; And He Really Creates True Joys within Himself, who Abandons those false Allurements he was before afraid to Loose.

* St. Aug. Conf. 9. c. 1.

THE Twenty Fifth Instance OF THE SUFFERINGS OF Our Blessed Saviour.

CHAP. XXV.

In His Exceeding Sadness *In The Garden of Olives.*

1 THE Passion of Our Blessed Saviour Began, as his Life did, by A Sense of the Cruel Death he was to Suffer, and The Sins of The World, He was to Expiate Thereby: When He Saw, Therefore, the Moment Draw Near,

Near, in which He had Determined to give up his Life, He Resolv'd to Suffer Death, after Such a Manner, that he Might, at the Same Time, Satisfie the *Divine Justice*, in its Strictest Demands; And Engage Our Souls to the Love of him, and Our Minds to Know and Acknowledge him; For, in this, all his Gracious purposes were Wound up, and all the Fruit Consisted which He pretended to Gather from his Labours.

He did not waite, Therefore, till The Executioners Came to Shed his Blood; But, Impatient of any Farther delay's, He gave Himself up to Such a profound Sadness, as all the Malicious Endeavours of his Greatest Enemies Could never parrallel, or Create in Him; Because the Hatred, they Bare Him, could not Equal the Love he had for us! He would have us Know, from the Begining of His passion, that It was Rather the Effect of his Choice, and his Love, than the Inveterate Animosity of the *Jews*: Upon This Account, he Retir'd to a Place, in which he was Accustomed to pray, that his Enemies Might the More Easily find him Out; And, There, Before they Appear'd, having Deprived his *Sacred Humanity*, of all the Succour it Received from *his Divinity*; And Representing, to it, at the Same Time, all it was to Undergo, in the Strongest and most Aggravating Circumstances, He Brought a Most Cruel and Bitter *Agony* upon it.

For, after having Washed his Disciples Feet; Instituted the *Blessed Sacrament* of his Precious *Body* and *Blood*, in Their presence, and Made a most Moving and Sublime Discourse to Them; He Entered, with Them, into the Garden of Gethsemane: Then, Seeing them Dejected, he Exhorted Them to have Recourse to Prayer, as the Most Effectual Remedy against Sadness: Afterwards he withdrew a Little Farther off, with Three Of his Apostles, *Peter*, *James*, and *John*; And, *There*, having Represented to Himself, in the most Lively Manner, all he was to go Through; The *Griefs*, The *Torments*, The *Revilings*, The *Triumph of his Enemies*, The *Scorn and Contempt of his Person*, of his *Wisdom*, of his *Miracles*, The New and Un-heard of Instances of Reproach and Cruelties, which were Preparing for him; he Fell into Such a Fit of Heaviness and Sorrow, as would have Cost him his Life, had it not been Preserved by a Miracle of Gods Providence: This he Witnessed Himself, when he Said * *My Soul is Exceeding Sorrowful, Even unto Death:* He Return'd to his Disciples, Hoping to Meet Some Comfort from Them Under this Extremity, but They Themselves were So Cast down with the Agonies of him who was So Accustomed to Cheer Them up in their Afflictions, that *The Blessed Jesus* Return'd again to his Devotions, without having Receiv'd the Least Comfort from Them; Insomuch that, in the Extremity of his Sorrows, he Address'd Himself to God Saying † *O my Father, if it be Possible Let this*

* St. Mat. 26. 38.

† Ibm. v. 39.

this Cup Pass from me; Nevertheless not as I Will, But as thou Wilt.

He found his Father Inexorable; And his Agonies Encreas'd to that Degree, that they Seem'd Rather to Resemble those of a Dying Man, than the Common Bitter and Vexations of Human Life: But, Notwithstanding all These Terrours He Continued his Prayer, According to that Account the Holy Evangelist Gives us of Him, where he Says; That * *Being in this agony he Prayed the Longer:* And The Struggle There was, in Him, at that Time, Between the Human and Divine Nature, was So great, That it Produced, from His Sacred Body, Drops of Sweat and Blood, in Such a Measure, That, after it had Soak'd thro' all his Cloths, it Moisten'd The very Ground, on which He Kneeled.

* St. Luk. 22. 44.

An Angel Descended, then, from Heaven, to Comfort Him; Not that he Wanted Vertue, Necessary to Overcome the Weakness of Human Nature, but to Teach all Those who Live In a State of Affliction, that they should Look for Their Comfort and Strength from Above: Therefore, the Angel, who was not Ignorant who This Afflicted Person was, did not propose, to him, Divers Motives of Consolation, But, only, Beg'd of Him, In the Name of Heaven and Earth, and of all Sinners, By his Infinite Love, to apply that Sovereign Remedy, to Their Distempers, which They could Meet with, no

III.

no where, but from him alone; And To Prefer, to the Ignominies and Reproaches of One Day, that great Acquist of Eternal Glory, which Would Redound to Him upon this Account: For, as the Apostle Says, of Him, * *For the Joy that was Set before him, he Endured the Cross, Despising the Shame, and is Set Down at the Right Hand of the Throne of God.*

*Heb. 12. 2.

Sinful Man, Therefore, for whose Sake our Blessed Redeemer has Undergone Such Great Conflict, would in This place, ask of God, Some Measure of This Gracious Spirit, and to Vouchsafe Him a Share in Those Divine Qualifications, which Disposed The Blessed Jesus, at that Time, by a Voluntary Submission, and without any Human Consolation, to Take upon Him to Undergo what appear'd So very Terrible To Flesh and Blood: No Words Can Express, nor no Imagination Comprehend it, without a Particular Gift of God's Holy Spirit.

IV. Thus it is that He Supports Others in Their Afflictions, Abandons Himself To Them! That the Comforter, of all the World Fals into Desolation; That *The Joy* of Heaven and Earth was Overwhelm'd with Grief, and, that the Son of God, to Win Our Souls, would Take Our Infirmities Upon Himself.

Two Things did Principally Cause Him This Deadly Sadness: The First was, The Greatness

Greatness and Infinite Multitude of The Sins of the Whole World which were all Particularly present to His Mind, with a Perfect Representation, and Idea of The Divine Majesty, Offended By So Many Crimes, and the Destruction of Souls Destin'd to Eternal Torments: The Second was the Vast Number of Those to whom His Death would be Unprofitable: As it was a Comfort to Him, on One Side, to be Certainly Assured of the Fruit That He Should Reap, by his Passion; He was Infinitely Afflicted, on the Other, to Think How Few would Receive the Benefit of that Remedy which He Had prepared for all Mankind: And, as to This, He found No Comfort, but In Submitting to The *Immutable Decrees* of *His Father*, who had Determined Him to Suffer for Those Very Souls, who would Receive no Benefit by his Passion.

His Struggles and his Prayer Lasted about Three Hours, During which, This Good Shepherd, who, in his Greatest Agonys did not Forget His Flock, Three Times Went and Visited his Disciples: Having found Them Asleep, the First and Second Time, He Exhorted Them to Watch and to Pray; And, the Third, Perceiving That He, who was to Betray Him, was not far Off, He Told Them * *Sleep on Now and Take Your Rest*: And, a Little after, † *Rise*; *Let us be Going*; *Behold he is at Hand that Doth Betray me*: By These words He Taught us, According To The Interpretation of V.

* St. Matt. 26. 45.
† Ibm. v. 46.

* St.

* St. Hil. In Matt. * St. Hilary, That " we Ought not To
" Expect to Watch and Pray till the Enemy
" is at Hand; But, it Behoves us to be upon
" Our Guard, whilst he is yet afar Off, for
" fear of a Surprize; That The Appre-
" hensions of Danger allows us not to go
" to Rest; But that, when The Hour is
" Come, in which Our Enemy Attacks us,
" Then we Should Throw off all Fear; And
" Trust to the Valour and Experience of
" Our General, who has the Charge of Our
" Dangers upon him, and who Fights
" for us.

In a Word, This Ineffable Love Mounted to Such an Excessive Degree, that It Could not be Satisfied, but by Reducing The Blessed Jesus to Such a State of Conscious Desolation, that could not be Parallell'd; And Convincing us *Thereby* that, In Him Alone, we Shall find the Remedy to all Our Fears, and all Our Fruits; For this Mystery is full of an Admirable Instruction for us: Our *Blessed Saviour*, Took upon Him to Undergo This Extreme Agony, that we Might Believe we have not Lost all, when The *Inferiour Part* Flies what is its Aversion; And to Inform us that we Shall not be Iudged According to The Infirmity of Our Nature; But According to The Disposition of Our Will: He Suffered, Indeed, a Mortal Grief and Pain, But it was in Proportion to The Strength of His Vertue, to Convince us, That God, Who Dispenses the Afflictions of This Life, According to His Pleasure,

Pleasure, * *Will Never Permit Them to Surpass Our Strength; And Will always Leave it In Our Power to Profit by Them:*

He has Clearly Discover'd to us Two Opposite Wills in Himself, The One *Corporal*, Which Abhorr'd Sufferings; The Other *Reasonable*, which Submitted to Almighty God; That The Christian Should not Think Himself to be Out of Favour with his God, Because The *Flesh* Rebells against The *Spirit*; But Should Endeavour to Subdue it; And Learn that Corrupted Nature dees not Hurt The *Inner Man*, So Long as The Rational Part Continues Stedfast to The Law of God.

An Angel Came down from Heaven to Comfort The *Suffering Jesus*, to Shew all Those Under the Dispensation of Afflictions That God does not Forget Them in Their Tribulations; That Their Sufferings are Known in Heaven; And That it is from Thence they Ought to Expect to Receive Their Relief and Succour.

Lastly, The *Son of God* Beseech'd His *Almighty Father*, That The Infinite Justice Might Dispense with So Rigorous and Exact a Precept, Although he Knew, Very Well, that his Request would not be Granted; To Instruct us, By So Necessary a Truth, That The Divine Assistance does not Consist, in Delivering us from Those Providential Crosses and Afflictions which arise Out of

of The Concern of The Divine Wisdom Concerning us, and which God, Out of his Providential Care and Goodness Sends upon us, But to Make us Bear Them with an Humble Submission, and Entire Conformity to his Holy Will, by Fixing Our Soul, for Ever, by an Inseparable and United Love.

A

Divine Contemplation,

Uuon The AGONYS *The* Blessed Jesus *Underwent in The Garden of Olives.*

I. THINE Amazing Love, O Divine Jesus, cannot Brook Any Delay; But Continually Presses upon thy Tender Soul! And to Waite So much as, but for two or three Hours, the Begining of this Bitter Passion, is a *Great Pain* unto Thee: Thou Canst not Stay Until the Soldiers Load thy Precious Limbs with their Heavy Irons; till The *Jews* and *Gentiles* Overwhelm'd Thee with Reproaches; till those Inhuman Butchers Mangle thine Innocent Flesh, and Nail thy Precious Body to The Cross; Thou Abandonest

bandoneſt Thy Self to ſuch a Deep and Bitter Agony, that forces Complaint from Thee; And Sends thee, for Succour, to Rude, Unpoliſh'd Creatures, Incapable of Any Senſe or Feeling of thy Miſeries!

How very Different is my Conduct, from what Thou haſt Shewn, O My Redeemer! I am Overcome with Sadneſs when I Seek for Joy; I am perplex'd with a Thouſand Vexatious Thoughts, from which I Labour to Extricate my Self; And Thou, O Thou Eternal Repoſe of my Soul, Overcome only by thine Own Love, Thou Voluntarily, and of thine own Impulſe, Abandoneſt thy Self to thy Sorrows; Thou Recolleſteſt to thine Annexious Mind, whatever Can Afflict So Great a Heart, a Soul So Tender, and So Charitable, the Refuge of All Thoſe who ſuffer Anguiſh, or are In Diſtreſs; Thou feeleſt All the Miſeries of Our Souls; But We feel them becauſe we are Miſerable; And Thou Partakeſt of them from the Dictates of thy Mercy.

It is not Sufficient for thy Love to Waite Thoſe Floods of Sorrows, which are Streaming on to Overwhelm Thee; Thy being Abandon'd by God and Man; The Injuries, The Reproaches and Torments which are prepared for Thee; Thou Tormenteſt Thy Self, Beforehand, by Repreſenting them, So Lively, to Thy Self, as if Thou had'ſt, Already, Undergone Them: And Thou Suffereſt Thy *Sacred Humanity*, Struggling, at the

the Same Time, between the *Desire* and *Fear* of thine Approaching Passion, to Shed a Sweat of Blood, Under the Excessive Violence and Conflict of it; And Thou Choosest to be Deprived of All Succour and Relief, as if Thou wert Utterly to Despair of All Comfort, and there were no more Place of Hopes, for Thee, therein, Either from Heaven, or Earth, or Amongst thy Friends, or even with thine Own *Eternal Father*, The *Almighty God* himself.

II. Is it thus, then, O Thou Divine Omnipotence, that Thou Humblest thy Self to become Weak, when Thou art to Engage with thine Enemies, whose Malicious Inveteracy, none but Thy Self Can Overcome! What's Become of That Desire of Thine, for That Sacrifice of Thy Self, which, with Such Impatience, Thou did'st Long for! The Hour Approaches, and Thou dost Tremble, and Thou art Sad, *O Thou Joy of my Soul!* Is This That Courage, and That Fortitude of Soul, which Every Afflicted Spirit is to find and Imitate In thy Person!

For Ever Let *That Infinite Love* be Praised, Glorified, Eternally Ador'd, O my God! Thou only didst Reduce Thy Soul, to *This Extremity*, that Thou mightest, In all things, Become like to me; to Convince me that Nothing Could have Induc'd Thee to go Through such mighty Excesses of Sorrow, but *Thy Love*; And that Thou Would'st be My Comfort, and The Pattern for me to Imitate

[illegible] Is Thy Sorrow; And, In Thy Ex-
[illegible] of Thy Death, We And, In that
[illegible] Our Redemption Wrought; But,
[illegible] Divine Compassion, that
[illegible] Salvation, In the Sacrifice of Jesus, to
[illegible] All the Assurances of Immortality, All
[illegible] for me, O dear, for me, who am
[illegible] Life but Misery and Infamy; To
[illegible] that my Bitter of Grief should take
[illegible] Thy Sweet Passion Thy Compassion,
[illegible] in Mercy, and Sorrow in a Sin. O Di-
[illegible] Infant! is what Can only proceed from
Thy Pure Love; Thine in Those Encomiums,
Thou Thankful Tongue more Cruel Than the
Jews and Gentiles, who are Sparing in Lof-
ment Thee: As yet expect Your Cruel In-
[illegible] approved; Neither the Nails, nor
the Spitting, nor those Reproaches, and Thou art
[illegible], Refresh'd with A Bloody Sweat,
with which the Very Ground on which Thou
Kneelest, is All Moistned! What makes
This Blood to Gush thus from Thy Veins,
but that Impetus of Thy Love for my Soul! O

Thou art, All, Love, O my Jesus! And III.
The Fire Which Thou art Come to Bring upon
Earth, is a Lambent Flame of *Pure Charity*;
How Happy should I be, had I never Se-
cur'd My Self from Thy Brightness, O
Thou Light Divine! But, How is it, That

I should have, to This Day, [illegible] Views, and my Other Thoughts [illegible] justifiable, but Thee of doing [illegible]? Why do I Seek for any thing out of Thee? Thy Love, for me, is so full of Zeal and *Mercy*, that Thou hast Thought on Every Thing, that was of any Concern or Importance to Me; and hast Consider'd Every Moment of Affliction, in which My Weakness would stand in Need of thy Assistance, That, In thee, Alone, I might Seek my Comfort, after I had seen Thee Subject to My Natural Infirmities.

Thus, it is that Thou would'st Secure me, by Thine Own Example; that, Although I find My Self to be Frail and Timorous, I Ought not to be Without Hope; That I am not Forsaken, by Thee, when I am Overwhelm'd with Sorrows; And, that, tho' I am Most Sensibly pierc'd with the Cross Providences of Life, I do not Cease, for all that, to be Thine; Since, Thou, Thy Self, O My God! All Powerful, and Invincible as thou art, hast not been Exempt, from These Infirmities! Blessed be thou, O Lord, who hast Ordained, That The Miseries which Oppress me, and which seem to Weaken, in Me, The Vigour of My Soul, May be Instrumental to Bring me unto Thee; For seeing Them, in thee, I Recover New Breath; And find my Self Encourag'd with A New Life and Vigour.

Thou

without Allowance, O Divine Wisdom! How IV.
Miserable is that Soul, which would be Hurtfully thine own, to find itself Oppress'd with a Broken and dejected Spirit; And Assaulted with such Violent Temptations, that it Knows not to whom To have Recourse; That it seems as if Heaven Were shut up against it; Then it Imagins itself Destitute and Bereaved of all Heavenly and Humane Succour; It is not Sensible of Either Faith or Hope, or Charity; It dares not so Much as Lift up its Eyes Towards Thee, so far it Thinks itself Banisht from Thee; And cannot Receive Consolation from any Created Being: It desperately Conclud's that Grace is Withdrawn from it, and that Nature Remains Abandoned to its own Corruption; It sees nothing, In itself, but Dread, Sadness, Dejection, Inconstancy, Troublesome Imaginations, Unbridled Passions, Disgusts, Thwartings and Bitterness: O Love Divine! O Faithful Friendship! Who art Never Nearer to thy Servants, than when they are Struggling Under the Severest Pressures of their Afflictions; To this Charity it is, Thou seemest to have Given up thy Self without Reserve: Thou hast Condescended to Undergo, in Person, All these Calamities, so Unworthy of Thee, that We might, Continually, Cast our Eyes on Thee, as on Our Pattern and Example; that We might Depend on Thee, as on Our Strength, for the Victory over our Enemies; And place an Entire Confidence in Thee, as In our Only Refuge and Security.

VI. Who am I, O *Divine Love*, To Enforce those Graces with which Thou dost Furnish me! O That Thou Would'st Create, in me, Such a Change as Thou hast Wrought in Thy Self; I mean, to make me Strong as I am Weak; as Thou hast Rendred Thy Self Weak, who Art The *Omnipotent God*: But, Dispose of me According to Thy Pleasure, O Thou Divine Love! I Yield my Self up unto Thee without Reserve; I Cannot Love Thee as I Ought, But by Thee; Nor Esteem Thee but In thy Self; nor Come Unto Thee unless thou Draweſt me; nor Rely upon Thee, if thou Thy Self doſt not Encourage me: And, Since Every Thing is, and Ought to Proceed from Thee, Take full Possession of me; that, Being In thy Hands, I may no longer be In Danger of my Self; Take from me All the Allurements of this Life, All Sight and Expectation of Humane Aids and Succours, and the fond Desires of Worldly Comforts and Delights; that I may look for none, for no Refreshment or Relief, but In Thee Alone, *O Thou Delight, Thou Life*, and *Quickening* of my Very Soul!

V. How Blind, and Infatuate am I, To Expect any Thing of Solid Comfort Out of *Thee, O Thou only Joy* and *Delight of my Soul!* How Ungrateful Am I, To forget The Return of Love and Gratitude I Owe Thee; And To Waſt away my Days in Sin, which has Brought so much pain and Anguish upon Thee! How is it Possible That I am not Asham'd and Confounded at my Self! How

can

and Hadst Do See my Self Alive! Why dost not Hell open The Earth to Gape, and Open Its Mouth Wide, to Swallow up Such a Wretch, when I Behold Thee Sorrowing and Lamenting, in Tears of Blood, the Sins that I have Committed! And With Such Bitter Agonies and Sorrow Expiating Those Guilty Crimes to which I have Prostituted my Degenerate Soul! O That I could but Once see my Self Abstracted from my Own Corruption! Or Rather that I had no Other Notion of my Self, but in thy Likeness! That my Soul were New Stamp'd into A Purer Image! What Different Idea's should I not have! To what Purpose was I Born into the World, if I must Needs Occasion Thee Such Great Affliction! Take Pity on my Poor Soul, O Thou *Infinite Mercy!* Pity me, I Beseech Thee, By all Those Agonies Thou Hast Endured; And Thy Precious Blood That Thou Hast shed Out of Thy Tender Love To me a Sinful Creature! Grant, That as I have Trespass'd So Much against thy Goodness, I may become Worthy To Suffer for thy Sake! Vouchsafe me, O Divine Jesus, Some Little Spark of that Inextinguishable Love, which Flames to Such a Degree, In Thy Compassionate Soul, Towards me, and All The World, That I may Know my Own Unworthiness; That I may Abhor my Self for my Ingratitude, and That I may Avenge me On My Self for what I Have So Wickedly Transacted against Thy Goodness.

VI. And as Thy Prospect of Those who shall Perish in Their Iniquity fills Heightens Thy Sorrows, O Thou Divine, Compassionate! Let me not be of The Number of Those, who shall be for Ever Doom'd to Torments! Thine Agonies are Great Enough, already, without being Aggravated by the Presence of My Damnation! Open, then, my Ears, that I May Hear The Inchanting Melody of Thy Voice; Open Thou Mine Eyes, That I May Behold the Pattern I am to Walk by; Open Thou My Lips, that I May Sing *Hosannah's* To Thy Mercy; Mollifie This Heart of Flint, That it May be Penetrated, and Become Sensible of Thy Bitter Sufferings; and that I May Dread, and shun whatever would Renew Thy Heavy Grief! Grant me, O Thou very Life of my Soul, That Every Thought within me May be New Moulded into a Conformity with Thine Own! That I may Bewayle my Extravagance and Sinful Follies as Thou Afflicteſt Thy Tender Soul, on The Account of 'em; And That I may Run in Queſt-after Thee, my Saviour, with the Same Zeal That Thou art Seeking *My Salvation*: Or Rather, O my God! I Leave all to Thy Self; And Resign all my Requeſts to The Determination of Thy Endearing Love! O Lead me, Change me, Tie me Faſt Unto Thee, Purifie my Soul, Transform me as Thou Pleaſe, And Let me Never More be Separated from Thee!

O Moſt

[illegible]

O Most Holy Mother of God! Who, shut up Close in Thy Closet, All that Night, Didst Most Sensibly Partake of All those Bitter Torments thy Purpose for thy Son; Impart to me Some Share of those Bitters that Infested then thy Sorrowing, Mothers-Heart, That I may Detest and Abhor whatever there is, in me, the Occasion of Those Agonies.

O Heavenly Quire, whose Happy Incorporation is Founded in the Blood, and Sufferings of This Divine Saviour; Importune Him for me, that I may Obtain those Blessed Instances of *His Love*, and those *Divine Graces*, which Flow from this *Fountain of Salvation*, that I may Bless and magnifie, with you, to *All Eternity*, This *God of Mercy* and Authour of All Bliss and Happiness. *Amen.*

A

Divine Contemplation,

Upon Our Blessed Saviour's Prayer In The Garden.

I. HOW Comes it to pass That I do not Learn from Thee, *O God of Eternal Truth*, where I Ought To Seek for Succour and Consolation, whenever I am Tempted, and My Soul is Desolate, within Me! Thou Betakest Thy Self to Thy Father, who will have Thee die for Me; Thou Addressest thy Self to his Love, which has Decreed Thee a Sacrifice for *my Salvation*; And Hast Recourse to His Almighty Hand, Even when it falls Most Heavy upon Thee: Wretched as I am! My Afflictions, would not press Me down so Long as They do, were I but to Come And pour forth The Sorrows of My Afflicted Heart before Thee: I Behold Thee, at thy Devotions, *Bathed in A Bloody Sweat*, Overwhelm'd with Grief, Supported by an Angel; And, in The very Time in which, One would Conclude, Thou shouldst be the Most Dejected, Thou goest To Meet Those

Those Mistaken who are Striving to Appease Thee; Thou prayest to Great Purpose to Thy *Heavenly Father's Will*, That Thou Canst not So Much as Suffer Thy Disciples to Defend Thee; Thou Appearest, in An Instant, to be pleas'd with *That* which, with So Much *Terror* and *Astonishment* Thou didst Dreadly Behold; In A Word Thou art, in A Moment, Become As Strong As Thou wast Weak, *Then*; And as Forward To Submit, as if The Bitter Commandment were Agreable unto Thee.

Whence Comes it Therefore, *O my God!* That I should Seek for any Real Consolation, out of Thee? Whence can I Expect to Meet with any Thing, *That's Solid*, But in Thy Goodness? I adore Thee, O Thou *Divine and Amiable Hand*, whose Chastisements are My Comfort, whose Afflictions Strengthen me, which Raises me by Laying me Low, and which by Mortifying Quickens and Enlivens me; I have Great Reason to be sad, when I Run away from Thee; When I grow Senseless of That Paternal Love, with which thy Providence Directs me; When I have no Notion that Thou Loveſt me More Tenderly, when Thy Rod of Correction is Upon Me; Then I Love my Self when I Seek my Happiness and Consolation Out of Thee.

It is The Heighth of my Misery to Fly Thee In my Crosses, and To Seek Relief any Other where, not According to Thy Will, But to the Dictates and Suggestions of My

Own

Own Natural Inclinations, always Set in Opposition to The Blessed Purposes of Thy Mercy, and most Compassionate Regards for my Soul: Deliver me from my Self; from the Temptations of my own Heart, *O my God*, for, I am my Own Destruction; By Throwing Obstacles, Incessantly, in the Way, in Opposition to Thy Grace, and the Tenders of thy Mercy!

But why Say'st thou to Thine *Eternal Father*, Most Blessed Lord! *O my Father, Not my Will, but thy Will be done*: Thou who Canst not Commit Sin; Who art by Nature Infinitely Pure and Holy, *Full of Grace and Truth*, Art Thou Capable of any Bent in *Thy Will*, Contrary to *That* of *Thy Heavenly Father*? No; *Blessed Lord*, But Thou wast, *Then*, Taken up with Thy Cares for me; And Fill'd with the Imaginations How to Relieve and Cure me! Thou Wouldst Suffer Those Impressions of Sorrows and Reluctancy upon thy Self, in Opposition to the Divine Will, That I may not Sink nor Lose my Courage under the Conflicts of Human Nature, when my Conscience will not Give Way to Them; And that I may Understand that I shall be Judg'd Only as my Sincere Inclinations have been, Either to Seek Thee, or to Shun Thee; To Obey or to Resist and Rebel against Thee.

O How Sweet is Thy Endearing Love! How Liberal, How Charatable, How Condescending! Thou hast Humbled thy Self

so

so low as to Feel those Murmurings which my Afflictions have Raised in me against Thy Goodness, to Teach me How to make use of Them, whenever They arise, by Betaking my Self to Thee, and by that means to Render Them A Subject of Merit, A Proof of Obedience; Of Love, and Faithful Devotion: Thou O Lord, art the *True Father* of This thy Poor Servant; And the Never-Failing Comforter of my Distressed Soul; When shall I Understand thy Goodness? O when shall I be able to cast an Eye into the deep Designs of thy Counsels? When shall I fix my Heart upon Thee with all the Faculties and Powers of my Soul! When shall I Seek Thee without Inconstancy? When shall I Obey Thee without any Opposition to Thy Blessed Will? When shall I be able to say, to Thee, upon all Occasions, with Sincerity and Truth——*Let thy Will, and not my Will be done.*

How have I deserved, O my God, to be Directed by A Providence so Wise, so Eligible, so Paternal! When Did I Ever Meet with any Hurt in Following thy Blessed Will, or when did I Ever Reap any Good, by Pursuing the Bent of my own Inclinations! It is by The Conduct and Directions of Thy Blessed Will, That all the Saints, Having Cast off all the Care of Themselves, and Having had no Other Concern upon Them but to be Punctual in Their Obedience to thy Holy precepts, are Arriv'd at that Happiness they now Enjoy, and that They shall, for

Ever

Ever Rejoyce in; And I, who am no Better than a Lump of Artificial Clay, am so Insolent as to Take the Government of my Self upon me! The Heavens, Above our Heads, The Elements Around us, All The Immense Universal World preserve their Order, and the Regularity of Their Motions, Only by the Impressions They Receive from *Thy Wisdom*; But as for me, who am but *but Dust and Ashes*, I have the Hardness to presume That I can do Any thing, Separate and Abstracted from thy Divine Assistance! Thou Vouchsafest to Cast thine Eyes upon Me, Notwithstanding Thou hast *Myriads of Angels*, who *do Thy Pleasure*; And I withdraw my Self from the Dear, Engaging Whispers of Thy Grace, and thy *Saving Guidance*, to Follow the Wretched Byass of my Own Depraved Will.

III. Blind, Infatuate, and Wretched as I am! I fancy my Self, Sufficiently Sensible Of Every Thing that is Sufficient for me to Understand, and yet I don't So Much As perceive those fatal Dangers with which I am Encompass'd, nor my Incapacity of Knowing my Self, without thy Holy Inspiration, who art *The Light Of Mine Eyes*, Without Thine Enlightening Grace! My Over fond Love of my Self, Blinds Mine Eyes, in Those very Concerns That do The Most Nearly Relate to me; And I Never perceive the Dangers that Threaten me, nor what I'm doing to my Self: I am too Well Acquainted with the Manner how to Change

Good

Good Else Evil; But wholly Ignorant and Incapable of Drawing Good out of it: I am Easily Thrown down, and fall, but Utterly Incapable to Raise my Self up again: I Can Soon Give up to Temptation, and cast my Self into Dangers, and am always full of Misery; But 'tis not in my Power to Extricate my Self, and get out of 'em: I Know, how to pervert and to abuse Thy Favours, and Render all the Blessings and those Graces Thou, Of Thy Goodness, dost Vouchsafe me, Fruitless and in Vain; And, *Thereby*, I Become Weak and Impotent, without Support, without Succour, Unsupportable To my self, Loaded with the Miseries, Into which I have Chose to Plunge, and Sink my Soul; But I cannot Return to Thee, my God, Unless Thou Break my Chains, Unless Thou preventest me; if Thou dost not Draw me to Thee; And yet, Still, I place my Chief Dependance upon my own Strength and Wisdom!

I am afraid to Give my Self up Entirely unto Thee; I would have Thee Guide me according to my own Shallow and Shortsighted View, And I do not Trust my Self to the Conduct of thy Careful Providence: O Deplorable Blindness! O Inconceivable Misery! I walk on like One that's Blind; I manage my Self like One Deprived of his Senses; *I Will, and I Will not*, like the Slothful Man; I am Cast down like a Coward upon the Least Contradiction; I Comfort my Self, without Reason, Like A Child, and

Cannot

Cannot Bear to Submit my Self to Thee, as a Rational Creature Ought to do.

Forgive me these Fantastick Humours, O Father of Mercies! And, ever, *Let Thy Will, and not my Will be done!* To Thee it appertains, O Thou God of Bowels, Thou Father of Compassion, to Bear with so Ungrateful a Prodigal, and to Cure him: O deal not with me according to my Unworthiness, but the Suggestions of thy Love; Thou Governest me, Everthose, with Wisdom, and A most Bounteous Goodness: Thou changest All my Miseries into Blessings, The Losses, The Temptations, and Adversities that Happen to me, Become, in thy hands, A Fountain of Grace, which Thou Projectest for me: And thou Leadest me to my Happiness, by that very Way In which I think my Self Lost, and Undone.

Thou Seest all my Wants, for, Thou art A God *Infinite In Wisdom*; Thou Graciously Intendest me All Sorts of Happiness; for, Thou art A Most Tender Father, Thou Softeneſt All my Pains, for, Thou Art The God of Perfect Consolation; Thou Healest All my Wounds, for, Thou Art The Soveteign Physician; And, Still, I do not give up my Self Entirely Into thy Hands!

IV. O Divine Jesus! O True Father of my Soul! Do Thou no more Regard this Foolish Will of mine; this Enemy to its Own Happiness! But Let thine Own be done, at all Times,

Thou, in Every Place, do Every Things; The Very Instant I Devote, with all my Heart, Every Rational Faculty of mine, a Sacrifice unto it! Guide me, O my God, when I go astray; Call me Back, when I Wander Aside from Thee; Stop me when I Fly Thy Presence; Take me into thine Arms, when I Return and Seek Thee; Deal with me, O Lord, According to Thy Blessed Will, Ever Right, Ever Holy, Ever Merciful; And do not Judge me according to The Iniquity of Mine Own, which is so Frail and Inconstant; Then shall How Ready and Free I am in my Promises, and How little just and faithful In Performance; Let Thy Love Supply whatever is Deficient and Wanting in me!

I would Rather Live, by Thy Appointment, In Chains, In the Power of mine Enemies, Abandoned, Afflicted, Persecuted, Than to Be Free, and Easy By my Own Choice: One Single Moment of Thy Divine Communications, may Render the most Bitter Dispensations Comfortable and Delicious: And the most Dark and Horrid Ways, By the Cheering Glimpses of Thy Brightness, Become The most Lightsome And Secure: Therefore, O my God, if it be not for my Good to spend my Days in Comfort, and Serve Thee in an Uninterrupted Peace; do Thou Dispose, and, After What method that Good Providence shall think fit, Ruffle Thou The Calm and Serenity of my Life! But Let me, always, Be under the Management

[illegible] be ever-
[illegible] as it is, by you, Accom-
plished in Heaven, Amen.

[redacted]

THE Twenty Seventh Instance OF THE SUFFERINGS OF Our Blessed Saviour.

CHAP. XXVII.

In The Treason *of* Judas

WHILST, The Blessed Jesus, after The Last Supper, Instructed his Disciples, in A Doctrine, Most Perfectly Divine, and made a Discourse full of Love and Tenderness unto Them; Whilst He was praying in the 1.

Gardon, and, All Over, Reeking in *The Bloody Sweat*, as in a Bath; *Judas*, that false Friend, was Thinking On Nothing Else, But How to Bring About and Accomplish His Resolution, He had made, to Betray Him: The Blessed Jesus Condescended to Bear this Treatment from A Wretch, To whom He had Express'd So many Endearing Marks of His Friendship; And, As it was Impossible for Him to Conform Himself, to all the Miseries we are Obnoxious and Expos'd to, Because There are many Sorts Incompatible with The *Dignity* of *His Person*, He made Choice of Those which make the Strongest Impression upon the Senses; The Sharpest of which are TREASON, and FALSE FRIENDSHIP. As there can Be no Pleasure more Charming and Agreeable, to an Honest mind, Than that which Results from *True Friendship*, To Falsifie This Principle, and Abuse it, is to Wound Such A Heart in the most Sensible Part, The Holy Scripture, Among The Greatest Blessings of this Life, Sets This, in the First Rank, *To have been so Happy as to Find a True Friend*: * *A Faithful Friend*, Says The Wiseman, *is A Powerful Protection*; *He that has Found One, has Found A Treasure*: *Nothing is Comparable To A Faithful Friend*; *His Fidelity is Not to Be Ballanced with Gold Or Silver*.

* Eccles. 6.

The Word Of God Also Represents Friendship Betray'd, As A *Great Calamity*, Especially when it Brings Upon A Friend, which is but Too Common, A Publick Disgrace,

grace, and Considerable Prejudice, By Discovering His Secrets: For, My Friend, being my Other Self, from whose Bosom I have kept nothing, and to whom I Have, without Reserve, Laid Oper, All that Has Happen'd To me Of Pleasant Or Disagreeable, if He Comes, Once, To Joyn in With mine Enemies; If He Discovers To Them, what He knowes of me; And makes use of That Confidence I Reposed In Him To Ruin me, Is it possible, without An Extrardinary Measure and Assistance of Gods Grace, That I should Connive or Wink at So Black and Monstrous A Perfidiousness? This is A Provocation So very Quick and Pungent to Common Nature, that He who Suffers it without Complaining, and Can Heartily forgive it, may pass for A Miracle of Patience, and Passive Resignation.

There are Some Learned Expositors, who are of Opinion, that This Affliction is meant by *That Angel of Satan*, Of Whom St. *Paul* Spake, when He Said * *There was Given To Me A Thorn in the Flesh, The Messenger of Satan To Buffet me*; And that, by This Expression, He Intends FALSE BRETHREN, whom *That Father of Schism* and Division, had Rais'd up, To Disturb Him, To Oppose His Doctrine, and to Lessen His Authority: This Persecution Touch'd Him so To the Quick, that He Beg'd, Often, To Almighty God To be deliver'd from it; And altho' He Could not prevail to get Rid of his Trouble, upon This Account, He Obtain'd *The Grace* to Bear it with A Christian Patienec and Resolution.

* 2 Cor. 12. 7.

II. What the *Blessed Jesus* went through, under This Head, is beyond all President or Example: I Say Nothing, here, of the Designing Attempts of the *Pharisees*, who, whilst they Invited Him, as Guest to their Tables, whilst they praised him with their Lips, and treated him with All the Outward Shews of Respect and Reverence, were Contriving to Surprize and Catch Him In his Words, and Laying Snares to Destroy him, although He had Never Offered any Thing but Good Offices unto Them; But, that among the Twelve Disciples, whom he had Chosen To be the *Pillars* of his Church, On whom he had Accumulated his Favours, Whom He Look'd upon as his *Intimate Friends*, and Trusty Confidents, That he Should, *There*, meet with One who had Betray'd him, Sold his precious Blood, and Delivered him up to his Enemies, this is what Ought to be Particularly Consider'd.

Some Days, Before, This Traitor *Judas*, Seeing *Mary Magdalene*, pour Some precious Perfume upon The Head of Our Saviour, made A Wretched Noise about it, Because This Fragrant Ointment was Not Rather Sold for Thirty Pieces, and Given To The Poor; *Not that He troubled his Head about the Poor*, as the Holy *Evangelist* Observes, *But Because He was A Thief, and Kept the Purse.* And So, To make up for The Loss of This Perfume, he Resolv'd To Sell The Blessed Jesus Himself To The *Jews*, who Sought To Take him; and without any Regard What should

should Become Of Him, Or Whether The Blessed Jesus should perish By their Cruelty, or that He should Deliver himself, by some Miracle, out of Their Hands, This Miscreant thought of nothing Else but how to Glut his Voracious Avarice.

It is very Credible, That, Endeavouring to put A Gloss upon So Execrable A Villany, In his Own Justification He Exclaim'd With Some Bitter Invectives against his Master, telling them perhaps, that whilst he Preach'd up Contempt for The World and its Vanities, he Eat and Drank with The Wealthy and The Worldings; That he made use of Costly Ointments; That he Was frequently In Company with Scandalous Libertines, And many other Such Infamous Reproaches as his Malice Suggested To Him, and which he knew would be Agreeable to Those To hear, among whom he Uttered Them: After This he Offered To deliver him up, without any Noise, into their hands: The *Jews* Accepted The Proposal, Commended his Zeal for The Publick Good, and Promised him Thirty Pieces Of Silver; According To The Prediction Of The Holy Prophet, * *They Have Taken Thirty Pieces of Silver, The Price of Him who has been Sold by the Children of* Israel. *Zach. 11. 12.

III. After This Unworthy Treatment, The Traitor Bids them to get Ready, but not To Stir till he came back to them: he told them The Time and The Place where The Holy Jesus did, Customarily, Retire, By Himself,

ſelf, to His Devotions; And Then He went and Sat Himſelf down at Table with Him; And, when Our Lord, Had Said That He Should Be Betray'd, That very Night, By One of His Diſciples, *Judas*, Although He Knew Himſelf Guilty, had the Aſſurance to Ask Him, Among the Reſt, who This Traitor ſhould Be? He permitted Our Bleſſed Saviour To Waſh His Feet; He heard his Heavenly Diſcourſe Upon The Mount; In this Condition of the Blackeſt Guilt, he Received The BODY and BLOOD of His Heavenly Maſter, with The Sacerdotal Dignity upon him; And This *Innocent And Meek Lamb* made no Difference Between him, and the Reſt, In the Communication of So many Bleſſings: But Seeing That his Obdurate Heart was not, In the Leaſt, Soften'd, By all Theſe Tender Inſtances Of His Endearing Nature, And, preſſed, Beſides, with Impatience, At the Delay of *That Great Work*, of His Paſſion, that was drawing on, He ſaid, To him, * *That Thou do'ſt do Quickly*: The Reſt of The Diſciples Though Our Saviour had Sent him Somewhere; And *Judas* went away That Moment to finiſh his Perfidious Treachery.

* *St.* John. 13. 27.

David when he was perſecuted And Betray'd By his Son *Abſalon*, Expreſt, In A moſt Touching Manner, how Senſible Our Bleſſed Saviour was, of The Treaſon of his Diſciple: † *For, It is not an open Enemy*, ſays He, *That hath done me This Diſhonour; Then I Could have Born it; Neither Was it One That Hated*

† Pſ. 55. 12, 13, 14.

Hated me, that thou Magnifie himself against me; then Would I have hid my Self from him; But it was Thou, with whom I Lived In Such Union; who wast my Guide, And my Friend; We Took Sweet Councel Together; And Walked unto The House of God In Company: In A word, It is Sufficient, Here, To Represent How Deep the Sorrows of the Blessed Jesus pressed upon him, upon This Conjuncture, To Observe, that he, who, afterwards, went through Such a Bitter Passion, and So many Torments, without Complaint, Lamented This to his Disciples, And to the Person that Betray'd him.

This Treachery of *Judas*, was The first Article of our Blessed Saviours Passion, which Pierced his Compassionate Heart so Sensibly; And wherein he has set before us, such Wonderful Examples of Patience and Meekness: Would to God that *Judas*, were the only Wretch that had Betray'd his Master! But Alass! This Perfidious Apostle, has a Numberless Generation, that follow his Example! we are still Selling our Saviour, every Day we Live; And we Barter away his Graces, and Give His Friendship In Exchange for These Momentary Pleasures, and the very Bubble of Worldly Glory: Altho' He is, *Now*, beyond the Reach of Any Impressions upon These Disgraceful Slights We Offer to his Worth and Goodness, 'tis Certain that he felt The Weight of 'em All, *Then*; And, at the same time that *Iscariot* Betray'd Him, The Divine Wisdom foresaw All Those False Brethren, and All those Perfidious, Prevaricating Christians, IV.

ſtians, who were to Riſe up againſt Him, in his Church, for whom, Nevertheleſs He was going to Give up his Life; His Friendſhip towards us is not Changed; And Our Falſehood and Perfidiouſnes, to Him, Encreaſes Every Day We Live.

But if Our Conſciences do Not Accuſe us of This Perfidious Falſehood, In Reſpect to our Bleſſed Saviour, Let Every One of us Enter and Examine Into his own Heart, and ſee whether he has Implanted, *There*, as Much Zeal and Devotion for the Glory of God, as he has of Impetuous Paſſion for the Honours of this World: If the Love of God has given Him a Dis-relliſh of all Human Engagements; If he Denies Himſelf in all his own Depraved Inclinations, that he may be Faithful to his God: If we Knew the Depth of our Corruption, we ſhould find Ourſelves much more Tainted, than we Imagin, with the Poyſon of *Judas's* Spirit: And ſhould, Perhaps, have no Leſs Reaſon to Abhor Ourſelves, then to Deteſt Him.

If we Conſider, alſo, How often we have Enter'd into the Temple of our Lord, Loaden with the Weight of a Thouſand Sins that we have Committed againſt Him; How often we have been upon Our Knees, before Him, Calling Him *Our Father*, *Our King*, and *Our Friend*, when, at the ſame Time, Our Hearts were at the Greateſt Diſtance from Him; How Long we have Lived

Lived in his House, Contracting ALLIANCES, with THAT EVIL ONE, against Him, and his Holy Laws; and Confederating with the World and the Flesh, who are his Enemies: Upon how many Occasions we have Broke Our Word with Him, after we have made *Solemn* Vow, and sworn Inviolable Fidelity unto Him; Is it Possible, then, to form any Notion, but that, with the Utmost Justice, He Looks upon us as *False Friends*, and True Prevaricators.

But it is not only for our Instruction, and to Expiate our Infidelities, that our Blessed Saviour, did so Voluntarily Suffer *That* of his Disciple; But also for the Support and Comfort of his Faithful Servants, who so Frequently Meet with the Like Persecutions, of Suffering by the Perfidiousness of Their False Friends, so soon as they Devote and give up Themselves Faithfully to their God: For, *Then*, they are Represented, as Humoursome, and Fantastical; They are Censured as Hypocrites, or Accus'd of Singularity; The Least of their Failings are Raised into Mountains; The most Innocent of their Actions are Mis-interpreted into Vice; their Zeale is Aspers'd under the Characters of Passion and Imprudence; The fear They have of Offending God, is Imputed to A Squeamish Scrupulosity, and a Meanness of Soul; And their Abstraction from the World is Interpreted, as the Effect of a Sullen and unpolish'd Genius, or a Fit of Melancholly: In a Word, all is Turn'd into Poyson, that they V.

they Act, or are Concern'd in; And their very Vertues are made use of, as the Instruments of their Persecution.

God alone, Knows how very Pungent and Afflicting a Persecution of this Nature is, to his Servants; and how much they stand in Need, then, of the Divine Assistance; For, they find Themselves Abandon'd by their Friends; They are Destitute of all Human Comforts; Because their Conduct is Downright; And they Seek for no Interest or Protection to Defend them, nor play no Cunning, Artificial Part, to prevent those Mischiefs that may Befal them: But all their Endeavours are, by a Simplicity of Good will, to Win the Hearts of those who Contrive their Ruin, Ever Choosing to Lament Themselves, and Groan in Silence, and to Suffer Wrong, Rather than Retort upon it.

The Blessed Jesus, *Then*, saw his Friends, and shew'd them, at that very Time, by an Everlasting Pattern and Example of Himself, How they Ought * *To Overcome Evil with Good*: And, Raising their Souls above all Human Objects, Place all their Affections *In Him*, Alone, whose Love and Friendship is Pure, and Un-Intermix'd; Whose Resentments, to his Enemies, are all Love and Charity, and who Conceals even the Treachery and Ingratitude of his Perfidious Friends under a Cloud of Divine Patience and Forbearance: He that is so Happy as to Relish these Truths, and to Receive all These

*Rom. 12. 21.

These Trials from the Hand of God, finds, in Him, His Peace, and Consolation.

A

Divine Contemplation,

Upon The TREASON *of* JUDAS.

THOU Wouldst, then, In thy Self, Try the Experiment, O Thou Love of My Heart, What a Most Sensible Affliction 'tis to be Betray'd by a Friend! Thou didst Receive that *Judas* to thy Table; thou didst Heap thy Blessings on him; And, as a True Friend, Thou didst Communicate thy Most Secret Thoughts, to him, at the Very Time when his Heart was full of Gall, and he had formed a Design to Deliver Thee up Into The Hands of Thine Enemies: O Wisdom Divine! Who didst see Into the Most Inward Soul of that Traitor, How Couldst Thou Look with a Calm, upon thy Brow, A Favourable Eye, upon Such A Wretch, amongst thy other Disciples; who Loved The Sincerely! Thou didst Wash his Feet; Thou Gavest him a share In Thy Divine Priest-hood, Thou didst Dispense, thy I.

thy *Precious Body* and *Thy Blood*, To him; Thou didst Connive at his *Perfidious Treason*, To Save him the Confusion of it.

Behold how Thou didst Deport thy Self, Under these Cutting Strokes, O Thou Divine Jesus! Behold the Constancy of Thy Friendship! Thou seest our Treachery's, and yet, still, Thou Seekest for us, Drawing us by the Cords of Thy Love, Winning us by Thy Blessings; And Endeavouring to Soften our Hearts of Flint, by the Unction of Thy Grace: What Advantage Couldst Thou Reap, by our Friendships; That should Move thee to seek, with so Much Eagerness and Care, After Those Very Wretches who Betray Thee! But it is The Characteristick of Thy Love, O My God, Never to be Dismay'd; But still to Pursue us with Thy Mercy, when we Flee Thee!

Although, Thou beest the Only Object, to be Beloved, O My Glorious Lord, and My Supreme Felicity! Thou wilt give me this Testimony of thine Affection, by Suffering so great a Pain, as that is, of *False Friendship*; That I may always Know, upon The Like Occasion, How to apply my Self and to find, In thee, a most Certain Comfort and Relief: I am not, at all, Surpriz'd, that thou shouldst Endure, also, this Contradiction, O Lord; for I Know 'tis the Effect of Thine Infinite Love: That, which Amazes Me, is that any Rational Soul, that has been so happy as to Converse with Thee, to Hear the Melody

Melody of thy Voice, the Harmony of thy Speeches; That has had a Taste of thy Divine Sweetness; And has been Replenish'd with the Delights of thy Treasures, Can Possibly faile of being Thine, for ever, of being Faithful to Thee.

The Sweetness of Thine Endearing Conversation Must Needs gain Hearts; The Inchantmens of thy Love Must Needs Win Souls; Thine Innocent Example, Cannot Choose but Command an Holy Immitation In the Conduct of Life; Thy Word Teaches the very Truth; Thy Providence Supply's all our Wants; And thy Bounty Sweetens all the Labours of this Painful Life: Nothing is More Visiable than thy Liberality, and The Truth, and Faithfulness of thy Love; And yet still, there is found so Base a Heart as to be Unfaithful unto Thee; A Disciple who Betrays Thee, A Wretch Indulg'd, and Loaded, with thy Favours, who has Betrayed and Sold thee to thy Worst of Enemies.

No Soul Can be Secure, but by Continuing most Strictly United unto thee, O Thou Refuge of my Life! And, The more Particular thy Favours are, the Greater, and More Dangerous is the Relaps when Such a One withdraws from thee: How Comes it, then, that I do not Tremble; That I am not afraid for my Self; And that I do not, Each Moment, Implore thy Mercy, since I find the same Depraved Nature, In me, III.

which

which could Produce so Horrible an Ingratitude, and so Black a Treachery.

Support me, with thine Almighty Hand, O Thou Infinite Bounty! If That *Grand Deceiver*, Has Inchanted one of thy Disciples, In thy Presence, Into so Monstrous a Guilt, what Security, Can I Promise to my Self! St. *Peter*, out of his too Great Dependance on Himself, deny'd thee Thrice; what, then, must Become of me, shouldst not Thou Strengthen the Weakness of my Frailty! Humble me, O Lord, and Keep me Nigh unto thee! For Alas! Without thy Helping Hand, I must Remain as I am, always under a Disposition to Abandon thee, and to Loose thee! I am never more Ready and Obnoxious to Betray thee, and to Become Perfidious to thy Love and Grace than when I think my Self most Secure.

I Cannot but Look on that, *Perfidious Traytor, Judas*, with Astonishment and Indignation, who Made so Light a Matter of it, to Destroy thee; That He Betray'd thee, without a Blush, under the shew of an Act of Love, and Friendship, and Prefer'd a Sordid Interest to thee, O my Redeemer, * *In whom are Included all The Treasures of Wisdom, and Knowledge of God.* But, all this While, I Look not Inward Into my Self! For, How often have I Concealed a Corrupt Heart under the Specious shew of Piety and Devotion! How often have I Abus'd thy Gifts, to Gratify my Vicious Passions? How often have I Prostituted

* Collos. 2. 3.

Prostituted thy Divine Graces for some Earthly Pleasures? How often have I preferr'd the Worlds Esteem and Favour, to Thy Divine and Spiritual Entertainments? How often Sold my Interest in Thee, and Barter'd away my God, for Things of no Value, without Listening to the Whispers of Thy Holy Inspirations, without any Regard or Notice of thy Law; And without the Least Impression, upon me, of thy Bounty! Pardon me, *O Infinite Mercy!* And Forgive my Pass'd Infidelities, and the Weakness of my Contrition for them, at Present; And Grant that I may Never more Relaps Into them: Is not *One Judas* Sufficient, O my God! without my being the Wretched Companion of his Treachery and Falsehood!

I Prostrate my Self, at thy Feet, O my Lord, and Master; I Confess, before thee, How Unfaithful I have been unto Thee: Make thy Self Satisfaction, O my Father, who art most Justly Displeased! Punish, then, this Traitor, as thou Please; Only Let me not be Deprived of thy Love; Let me not, Like *Judas*, forfeit THAT, Because I, Return unto Thee! Remember, O Lord, what thou hast done, to Mollifie the *Harden'd Heart* of thy Apostle; What Mighty Pains thou wast at, altho' all prov'd in vain, to Bring him Back; And how Sensibly thou wast Touched at his Destruction: O Let me Entreat Thee to Express the same Love for me, as thou didst shew to Him, Since thy Boundless Charity is the same for All Sinners!

ness! And make that Sensible Impression this very Moment, in my Heart, in which I am Confessing, my own Infidelities, before Thee, and Making an Entire Resignation of my Self, and Submitting to All the Satisfactions Thou shalt Require of me.

I am not able to Endure the Wretchedness of my present Condition any Longer: I have Liv'd Long Enough in A state of Disobedience and Infidelity; Change me, O Lord! Do whatever Thou please, with me, provided Thou do not Cast me out of thy Favour: Tho' I have been one of Those who have Betray'd Thee; O Let me, *Now*, be of their Number who Adore Thee, and Sincerely Love Thee! 'Tis the Triumph of Thy Love, to Transform Sinners into Saints: And New-Create the Worst of Infidels into thy Faithful Servants; Change me, Therefore, O Thou Love most Divine! And O Let me Continue *Faithful unto the End*, Untill the Moment that I shall Render up my Soul unto Thee.

VI. But How, O King of Glory! Why didst thou Permit, That Abandon'd Traitor, to Sell Thee as a Slave? Why did thou Suffer him so far, as to abuse Thee so Unworthily and to Lay *Thine Honour* so very Low! O Infinite Bounty! O Inconceiveable Love! It is thy usual Custom to Act, *After this Manner*, O Sweet Jesus! Thou Givest thy Self, without Reserve; And when Thou hast Once Given thy Self to A Soul it

Treats

Trusts Thee as will! Unhappy Creatures, thus to Abuse thy Love! Blessed, on the Other Hand is that Prudent Soul, who Embraces Thee; who Enjoy's Thee; and Receives Thee as His utmost Treasure!

Didst Thou but know, O unfaithful Disciple, The Worth of Him whom Thou Hast Sold, and The Immense Riches that are in Him; Thou wouldst Sell thy Very Self To Purchase Him; But if Thou art Resolv'd to make A Price of Him, O Sell Him unto me! I'll Purchase Him at The Expence of All that I am Worth, and with my Very Being: The *Jews* shall not get Him Out of my Arms; I will Shut Him Close up, In my Soul; And There I'll keep Him; There I'll Ever pay my Homage to Him: How is it, O my Dear Saviour, that I do not Flie, with All my force, to Purchase Thee, Seeing How that Miscreant is plotting to Betray, and Sell Thee!

Thou wilt not Have me to Enjoy Any Thing that is more my own Than thy Self, who art my Only Treasure: Thou art *my Father*, *my Brother*, *my Friend*, my Riches, my Food, And, if I may presume So to Express my Self, Thou art, even, *my Slave*; For, In Truth, Thou didst make thy Self A Slave, to purchase my Liberty; And, Thou wouldst be mine, by All the Titles, which Give A Man A Right to Any Thing He possesses: How Rich am I, In Possessing Thee, O my God! Thou, Thou Alone art *All Things* unto me! I Receive Thee, Then,

O Divine Jesus, as my Bliss; I Slighted thee as my Treasure; It is my Desire that Thou Shouldst be All my Felicity; And, for the Love of Thee, I, for Ever, Bid Adieu, To Every Thing that is no Part of, no Relation to Thee.

What can that Soul desire, to whom Thou dost not Suffice, O Thou Life of my Life! Is it possible, for Him, to find Any Thing Else that can Content Him! The Soul that Has no Relish to Thy Sweetness, and That Seeks its Satisfaction any Other where, is out of Order, is Very Sick, if not quite Dead: In thy Fruition I am Rich; without Thee, I am Poor; In Thee I am Replenish'd with Every Good Thing; Without Thee I want Every thing. Come, then, Enter In-to my Heart, O Divine Jesus! Let me Love Thee; Let me Enjoy Thee, Let me Never forsake Thee, Never Lose Thee! Do Thou Set up thy Kingdom In me; And Let me Be thy Faithful Subject, Let me Live In Thee, O my Bliss! my Love, my Joy, my Ever-lasting Happiness and Glory!

VII. Thou knowest O *Thou Faithful Friend of my Soul!* That the too Great Attatchments of it, to its Friends, Weakens thy Love, Stops the Communications of thy Holy Spirit, and Thy most Secret Inspirations: And, Because Thou wouldst be the Only Friend of Our Souls, whenever they Return to Thee, thou presently Givest them to See the Inconstancy and Treachery of Human Friendship: Thou

Knowest

Knowest How Very Sensible and Quick that Pain is; and art not Ignorant of the Endearing Pleasure that One finds In the Integrity of A True Friend: Thou Hast, Therefore, Commanded me to be Faithful to *All*, But to be, Inseparably United, In my Heart, only unto Thee; and to fix my Confidence, Entirely In Thee Alone; To depend on thee, only, as my Comfort, and All the Pleasure of my Life: All this I Agree to, from the Bottom of my Heart, O my God! But, As, for my Sake, Thou Hast Undergone The Treason of A false Friend, O Give me the Strength, Patiently to Bear, whatever Shall Happen to me of the Like Nature; And, Grant that I may Never Suffer my Self, Either to be Inebriated with The Love of the World, nor yet be dejected by the Perfidiousness and Falshood of Mankind.

If it be thy Pleasure that The World Should Hate me, and pursue me with its Malice, *Thy Will be done*; Only Vouchsafe me the favour to Rectify my Will also for that Dispensation: Take Thou Possession of my Heart; Shew me the Light of Thy Countenance; Fill my Soul with Thy Love; Teach me, not to Complain; Not to Revenge my Self; To Render Good for Evil; And to Treat those very Men who are my Greatest Enemies, as if they were my Friends; In A Word, Inform me Into thine Own Image, that I may, In Every Temptation be Like thy Self; And to have no farther Views; to Wish for Nothing more: With what Assu- VIII.

rante Can I Complain of my false Friends; How Can I desire, O my God, that All the World Should Be well Affected towards me; And that none Should fail me In the Strictest Instances of Friendship and Good will, when I Remember How Thou hast Entertained Him that did Betray Thee, at thy Table; And that Thou Gavest him no Other Title than *That*, of *Thy Friend*, at the very Instant that He deliver'd thee up Into the Hands of thy Greatest Enemies, and Mortal Executioners.

O Thou *Faithful Friend* of my Soul! There is Nothing But thy Friendship, that is Solid, Constant, and Has A True Foundation: And, Without Regrett, I give up All the Rest, that I may But be deem'd Worthy of it: Take away, and Root Out Every Other Passion, of Love, or Hatred, from my Soul, that would prevent Or Hinder my Conversing with Thee: Open my Interiour Eyes, O Thou Light Divine! And make Known unto me, the Happy State of A Soul, forgotten, Despis'd, persecuted; which, distanc'd far from All Earthly Affections, may find Thee, Alone, Love Thee with full Liberty, unite itself, most Intimately and Entirely, to Thee, And, with A faithful Assurance, call Thee, *my Father*, *my God*, my only Love! Blessed Moment! Thrice Happy Hour! Wilt Thou Never Come! O That I might but pass Every Article of my Life, In this State of Love, This Blessed union, In These Embraces!

O Queen

O Queen of Angels, Faithful Handmaid, True Lover of The Blessed Jesus! Holy Mother, And Refuge of Sinners; Help me to Obtain the favour of thy Well-Beloved Son; And Root out All other Loves, that Have possess'd my Heart.

Blessed Spirits, who Indulge, and are Swallow'd up, In the Divine Love; And who Love All Things In God; Vouchsafe me A Link out of Those Inestimable Chains which Tye you for Ever Fast to Him. *Amen.*

THE Twenty Eighth Instance OF THE SUFFERINGS OF Our Blessed Saviour.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Upon His being Taken In the Garden of Olives.

1. THE First Effect of *Judas* his Treason, was The Arrest of Our Blessed Saviour in the Garden of *Olives*. This Traitor, Having already Lost All Shame, appear'd at the Head of The Soldiers, as the Chief-Agent In the Adventure;

tate; It is no Wonder, that an Apostle, who Has Abandon'd God, Should, In so Short A Time, fall into Such Extreme Excesses, since Our own Experience Informs us, that There are None, more Wicked Men, than Those who, after They Have been Enlighten'd, Have Abandon'd The *Purity* of *Faith*; And the Perfection of an Evengelical Life: when They have Once Despis'd the House of God, and Shaken off the yoke of Christ, After that, They Observe no Measures; And being Disgusted, at *That Fountain of Living Waters*, They Run to Drink with An Insatiable Thirst, In those *Poyson'd Streams* of *The World*, and *The Flesh*; And One might Rather be Surpriz'd at The Crimes they don't Commit, than at the very utmost Guilt they Wallow in.

And, *Thus* it was with *Judas*, who, After He had Shut his Eyes to The *Divine Light*, And Stop'd his Ears against *The Word of Eternal Life*; After he had Extinguish'd, *The Love of God*, In his Heart, Gave Himself up to the Devil; And, Became, In A Very Little Time, Chang'd from an Apostle of The Holy Jesus to be the *Ringleader* of Those who Sought to Take away His Life: He Warn'd, them at the Same Time, to use A great Deal Of Precaution, Least He Should Escape Them.

As He Knew that it was Customary, with the *Holy Jesus*, to Retire, in the Evening, Into the Garden of *Gethsemane*, and, *There* II.

by Himself to Pass the Night in Prayer; He Concluded, that Both the Time, and Place, were very proper for the Executing His Black Design: He, Therefore, privately, went Out of Town, with A Detachment of some *Pharisees*, with A Large Body of Armed Solders; And, Because He foresaw, that All Precautions, and the Very utmost of Humam Force would be useless, and In vain, If the Blessed Jesus, had any Intention to Discharge Himself of 'em; He often Minded them of *This*, as an Article of Their Contract, that He Should be Quitted of His Engagement, provided He did but Once Deliver Him into Their Hands, whatever might Happen Afterwards.

But, There was, Besides, Another Inconvenience, In the Way, (*viz.*) That, many Amongst them, did not know the Blessed Jesus; And, that Even Those, who did Know Him, might Mistake Him In The Dark! Therefore, This Traitor went some Steps, Before them, Giving, Them This Signal, That The Man whom He Should Kiss, was The Person They were to Seize upon: Such were The Projects, Such The Secret Contrivances of That Villain whilst This *Meek Lamb*, with His Eyes Bubbling with Tears, All Over *Bathed* in A *Sweat of Blood*, And Burning with Love, Even for The Unhappy Wretch who was Betraying Him, Treated with *His Eternal Father* About The REDEMPTION and SALVATION Of Mankind.

The

The *Blessed Jesus*, Seeing, now, That His Hour was Come; And, that He was going To fall Into the Hands of Sinners, would give, His Disciples, Who were not far Off, An Heroick Example, Of That Steddy Constancy, and Unshaken Resolution, With which They Themselves were Appointed, One Day, to Suffer Heavy Torments, for His Sake; And, of That Submission They Ought to pay, to The Determinations of God's will, However Difficult and Terrible they might Appear to Flesh and Blood: Therefore without Waiting for the Coming of The Impostor *Judas*, or The Soldiers, He Brought With Him; The *Blessed Jesus*, Went to meet them with A Serene Countenance, *and asked Them whom They Sought for?* III.

Although He had Determined to Let them Take Him; He Thought fit, in the first Place, to Shew *His Divine Power*, to His Apostles, Yet *Weak In Faith*; And, By them, Inform *All the World*, That Human Malice, could Have done Nothing Against Him, *of Itself*; That He was Tied Stronger by The Chains of His Own Immense Love, and Charity, than By Any Links of Iron, His Enemies Could Produce; That His Bitter Passion was the *Mere Effect* of his Love, Rather than of Any Inhuman Violence of the *Jews*.

In A Word; To Render them Inexcusable, who Came to Take Him; To force Them to Confess the Weakness and Insignificancy of Their Attempts; To make them sensible of

of The Crime, they were Committing, And to Repent of it; After They Had Declar'd that They Sought for *Jesus of Nazareth*, He Answer'd them, *I am He*; And These words of His, were So Powerful, that *Judas*, The Pharisees, the Soldiers, and State-Officers, were Struck Down, at The Expression, as if They Had Been Smote With A *Dart of Lightning*.

The *Blessed Jesus*, might Have withdrawn Himself, at that Juncture, with All the Ease In the World, if He had So Pleased, or Else have Wrought some *Other Miracle*; But, Contenting Himself, with Having Given them Such A Demonstration of His Power, He Permitted them to Rise; And, After Having Asked them A *Second Time*, *whom they Sought* for? And They had Answer'd, That it was for Himself; He forbad Them To Meddle with Any of His Disciples; And, *This Divine Shepherd*, In the Midst of His Own Danger and Extremity's, did not Neglect the Care, or to Express His Tender Concern, for His Flock; So That, In Effect, His Disciples Received No Ill Treatment; They were not, So much as, Threatned to Be Arrested; Which was Something very Extraordinary at Such A Juncture: *But These are Always out of the Reach, of the Utmost Malice, who Have the Omnipotent God for Their Protector!*

IV. The Blessed Jesus would not Suffer Them, at that Time, to Load His Precious Body with

with any Fetters; First, He had A Mind to Speak; with his Accustomary Sweetness, To the Chief of the *Pharisees*, and the Priests, whom He Saw Intermix'd among the Soldiers, and Engag'd In an Action So Unbecoming Their Character: He askt Them, Why They Came to Take Him In the Night time, as A Thief, with Arms and Torches, Since He was Every Day, among Them, In The Temple, where He Taught In Publick? They had Nothing to Say, for Themselves; Nor had They the Power So much as to Touch Him; When One *Malchus*, Servant to The High Priest, Advancing with Greater Boldness Than the Rest, St. *Peter* ask'd Leave, of Our Blessed Saviour, to make use of His Sword; and, without Staying for an Answer, Smote *Malchus*, and Cut off His Right Ear: But, The *Blessed Jesus*, Immediatly put it on again, and Healed it, and forbad St. *Peter* To use Violence, upon Any Occasion.

* *Would Ye not*, Said He, *That I Should Drink of The Cup which my Father has Given me?* How Then, Shall The Scripture be Fullfilled! And what Will Become of Mankind, if I do not Purchase Their Redemption With my Death! Put up thy Sword; And, Remember, that † *He who Smiteth with the Sword Shall Perish By the Sword: If I Thought Fit To make use of my External Power, To Defend my Self, I Could Easily Desire Assistance of my Heavenly Father*, Who would Send me More Than Twelve Legions of Angels! Then, St. *Peter* Retir'd; And, all the Rest, of the Disciples

* St. John, 19. 11.

† Ibid.

Ran

Ran away; Which Flight of Their was not only an Effect of Their Cowardise, but The Result of the Determination of *That Eternal* Council and Wisdom, which had Decreed The Blessed Jesus to make *That One Oblation of Himself*.

Then, Turning to The Pharisees, He Permitted Them To do what They Would, Saying to Them, * *Behold here, Your Hour; And The Power of Darkness Prevailes*——And, Immediatly, *Judas* Drawing Near to the Holy *Jesus*, Accosted, Him, with these Words; *Hail Master! And Kissed Him:* It was After This Manner that The *Jews* were Accustom'd to Salute Each Other of Their Friends, In Palestine; And The Blessed Jesus, Having Received *This Traitor* Into the Number of his Disciples, did not Reject Him; But After His usual Sweetness of Temper, Said, To Him; *Friend! Wherefore art Thou Come? Thou Wouldst Betray The Son of Man with A Kiss*; And makest use of This Ceremony of Friendship To Deliver Him up to His Enemies.

* St. Mat. 26. 48.

It is A Difficult Matter, To Determin, In This Place, which of These Two Facts is most to Be Admired; The Hardness of Man's Heart, when He has, Once, Abandon'd God; And is Determin'd unto Sin; Or, The Sweetness, and Tender Disposition of The *Blessed Jesus*, Towards Those very Reprobates, To whom, All that He has Suffer'd for Them, He foresaw Would Be in vain. It Affords us, Also, Matter of Great Dread, and Humiliation;

milliation; That, Being, All of us, Taken and formed Out of The Same Masse, *of Corruption*, we are, as Well as *Judas*, Obnoxious and Liable to the Same Apostacy and Infidelity.

Judas was not Soften'd, By these Expressions, of Our Blessed Saviour, So full of Sweetness and Engaging Generosity: And, Those Wicked Instruments, of The *Jews*, who Only Waited for The Signal, Flung Themselves, with All Their Fury, upon This *Innocent Lamb*; Bruis'd Him with their Buffetings; Trodd and Stampt upon His Feet; Bound His Sacred Hands Close Behind, upon His Back, Loading Him with A Thousand Injuries; Calling Him an Impostor, A Magician, One Possess'd with The Devil, Seducer of The People, And Throwing many Other Indignities upon Him, Whatever their Rage or Malice did Suggest, as it is Easy To Imagin.

They Dragg'd Him, Afterwards, with an Extreme Violence to The House of the High Priest; Discharging All their Hatred, against Him, without the Least Reserve, or Pity, with which Their Malicious Heart had been So Long A Broiling; Altho He did not use the Least Resistance: For, This Heavenly Lamb, During All These Cruel and Injurious Treatments, Open'd not His Mouth to Complain: And whilst He was Thus Worried Amidst These Wolves that Hungred for His Blood, His Heart and Thoughts Were Still

In

In Heaven: In Continual Sighs and Groans He Invok'd Mercy, of his Father, for A Sinful World, for whose Sakes He Offer'd up Those Outrages, unto Him, which He Underwent: Nothing Ruffled the Serenity of His Soul: He, who Trembled So, Before The Combat; Who was Heavy unto Death, Recovered A New Strength from The Wounds which He Receiv'd In Battle; more Earnestly Inflam'd, than Ever, with An Eagerness to Consummate The Sacrafice of His Blood!

V. Those, who have devoted Themselves to God, may find, Here, and In the *Other Mysterses*, of Our Blessed Saviours Passion, An Ample Subject for their Contemplation: Not only in Considering the Exericour, and Visible Instances of His Sufferings; But, much more, by Examining the Inward Sentiments of His Afflicted Soul: Those, who, Even Look no Farther, than The Bark of This Falling Pine, the mere Out Side and Superficies of Those *Amazing Mysteries*; must Needs Reap A Great Deal of Fruit Thereby; Because Their Souls, Ever find, In Them, A most Solid Nourishment: But, He that Can *Enter Into the Holes of The Rock*, And Discover, Those Inefinite Treasures that are Hid within This HEART OF LOVE, Is So Surpriz'd, So Chang'd, and So Transported that He Knows Himself no Longer! But Experiences, with an Inffable Rapture, and delight, that *Those Divine Hands*, He

Sees

Sees So Barbarously Tied Together * Dispit. Cor. 5.
Rejoyce In A Plenteous Abundance! 5.

But, if we do not, Yet, Conceive The Treasures that are Included, in *This Inhumane Seisure*, and *Severe Treatment* of The *Blessed Jesus*; Let us, at Least, Compare Our Life with His; And His Immaculate Innocence with Our Sins: Let us Consider what He Has Undergone; And, what we Have Deserv'd; And we Shall find, that if, for the Forgiveness and Expiation of Our Heavy Crimes, He Should Exact the Like Sufferings from us, we Should, Still Have Infinite Reason To Bless his Mercy for Ever! How Great, Therefore, and How Strong Ought Our Love, and Gratitude, To Be, To Him, Whilst we Behold *The Son of God*, Drawing All the Fury, of His Enemies, *Upon Himself*; To Save His Faithful Servants and Disciples from it! That He could not Bear, The Least of his Followers To be Evil Treated; And that He Took the Load, of All Our Chains, upon Himself, To Procure us An Entire, and Perfect Freedom.

Are we not Very Wretched, if, Instead of Regulating Our Appetites and Inclinations of Our Souls, and Keeping Them Under The Subjection to His Holy Laws, Instead Loving Our Easy Chaines, and Relishing the Happiness of So Engaging A Captivity, we Break The Yoke That He Imposes on us; Without Considering, That, in Following The Dictates of Our own Licentious Passions,

and

and Abandoning Our Selves To A Liberty that is Criminal, and Unjustifiable, Before God, we Load The Blessed Jesus with Fetters, Incomparably more Heavy and Intolerable Than Those with which The Jews Loaded and Confin'd Him; and that, Thereby, we Sell Our Selves Into An Eternal Slavery, and Unhappy Bondage.

A

Divine Contemplation,

Upon Their Apprehending Our Blessed Saviour In The Garden of Olives.

1. WHAT Human Creature, is it, who Dares Presume to Stop Thee? What Mortal that Can Retrench or Bind Down Thine *Infinite Omnipotence, O King of Glory!* Is it Possible That There Should Be met with, In The whole Creation, A Wretch So Barbarous as to Treat Thy *Divine Person*, with So Much Indignity? Thy Sweet Disposition, O my God, Attracts Souls! Thy Meek Condescention Charms and Enlivens Dejected Spirits; Thy Ravishing Presence Dazels The

the Eyes, and Wins The Very Souls of [illegible] who have the Impudence to [illegible] ; And Thy Blessings Be-day and Be-night All the World ! How Can there be [illegible] then, Any of Human Race, so Unnatural, so Cruel, and so Rash, as to Lay their Hand upon The *Lord's Anointed*, Load Him with Injuries, Affronts, and Chains, As a Thief and Malefactor !

And, as for Thee, O Thou Life of My Soul ! Thou dost not Only, forbear to Escape ; or to Hide Thy Self ; But Thou art Before-hand to meet Thine Enemies ; To *Them*, Thou yieldest up Thy Sacred Body ; And forbiddest Thy Disciples to Resist ! With the Touch of Thy Finger Thou healedst the Wound of *Malchus* who was Come to Take Thee ; Thou Refusest the Assistance of Angels ; Thou sendest away Thy Disciples ; And art Only taken up with the Thoughts of drinking that Bitter Cup, by thy Self, which Thy Heavenly Father's Justice has prepared for Thee ; Because Thou wouldst Become the *perfect Model of our Obedience* ; And The Redeemer of Our Souls !

Blessed Be Thou, and Glorified for Ever and Ever, *O My Hope*, and *My Salvation* ! After Thou hadst Importun'd, *Thy Eternal Father*, that He would dispense with Thee, from drinking *That Bitter Cup* ; Obedience is so Dear and Sacred, to Thee, that Thou wouldest Rather Choose, *His Will be Done* ! Notwithstanding All the Conflicts and Re-

[illegible] of [illegible] Nature! Thou [illegible] [illegible] Ready to [illegible] Thy Persecutors, the Very Dies of [illegible] Tormentors Could have Such a Mortal Challenge and Deadly Power; And yet Thou [illegible] consent to Conceal thy Majesty; that Nothing may Check the Fury of those Enemies.

II. Discover to my Soul, O Thou *Splendour of Eternal Light!* those Inward Chains which tie Thee So Close to Thy *Blessed Father's Will*; and prove Thee such a Slave to Those Incomprehensible Love for Mankind! Were it not for These Invisible Ties, who Could Take Thee? who Could So Immediately Treat Thee, O My Love! By These Cords it is That Thou art, thus, tied down and drag'd along, flung down upon the Ground, and Exposed to such malicious Insults of Violence and Outrage! Why dost not Thou Grant me a Share of Those precious Chains, O Thou *Very Life, of My Life!* Why dost Thou Not, at Least, Bind me fast, While, whilst Thou art fetter'd, thus, *for My Sake!* If thou wilt, only by thy self, go through this painful Captivity, I deserve, to be me free; O Grant me, that I may Never Abuse This, So *Dear-bought Liberty*, by plunging my Self into those Sins, which, I Behold Thee Expiating at So Severe a Rate.

III. I Bless Those Sacred Hands, which are pinion'd so Close together, only to Chain down the Malice of Mine Enemies; I Adore

[illegible] Oppressions Chains, who have [illegible] Miserable Slavery on me; And I [illegible] not be much more happy for my [illegible] I, all over, Manacl'd with Fetters, [illegible] Free, as I am, O My God! [illegible] feel my Misery; I Conjure Thee, by These Chains, to deliver me from that Sinful Bondage which keeps me, at such a distance, from Thee.

I, then, look upon my Self to be Free when No One Contradicts me; When All the World is on My Side; when Every Body, Loves, Honours, and Praises me; when I can fix my Mind, My Discourse, My Thoughts and Attention, on what I please; When I Enjoy Every Thing I think Convenient, and do only what I List: But Alas! I Deceive my Self, all this while! For I am never More a Slave; But am not sensible of My Want of Freedom! For, if, amidst This Licenciousness, or at the Conclusion of These Pleasures, to which I have Given my Self so Great a Loose, Thou shouldst Vouchsafe to Touch my Soul by some Secret Whisper of Thy Holy Spirit; If I would but allow my Self the Happiness, to Converse with Thee, O my God! Then should I soon feel the Weight of My Chaines; And find my Self tied fast down to the Earth, with an Infinite Bondage of Carnal Lusts, which hinder me from Raising up my Soul to Thee; Then should I Begin to know how much I am Blinded by my Passions; And, that, That which I took for Liberty and Freedom, was

the Vilest Slavery: O *Sacred Choice*! O *Divine Hands*! Deliver me from this *False*, *Mistaken Liberty*, or Rather from This Base Bondage, which ties me up from following and Loving Thee! Is it possible that I should Ever have more Choice of *That*, as *to Happiness*, which Robs me of my *Supreme Felicity*!

IV. Unhappy Time! Ill-boding Hours! In which I had my Swing in doing Evil; In which I, always, found I was a Slave Unto my Self; But never put on Thy *Easy Yoke*, O My Only Redeemer! shall I be, for Ever, In this Unhappy Condition! Wilt Thou, for Ever, Bear with These Disorders in My Soul? When shall I see my Self free from These Depraved Lusts, and my Soul devoted to Thy Love! When Wilt thou Break those Chords that Link me, so fast, to my Self! And Separate me from thy Mercy!

O, That I had never disposed of my Heart, but Only unto Thee! But alas, not Content, to Separate my Self from Thee; And to Engage my Self to the Creatures, by my Degenerate and Irregular Inclinations; I have Bound Thy Sacred Hands with much more Harsh and Cruel Cords, than the Very *Jews* did Bind Thee with; This is The Almighty Arm, O my Jesus! that has kept *Satan* Prisoner; These are the Hands which Break the Chains of My Sins, which Bring my Enemies Into Subjection; and which are Alway Loos'd and Open to Indulge me with thy

thy [illegible]; Thou art, always, Tendering thy Graces to me; And I Refuse them! And prefer the Silly Allurements, of The World, to Thine Eternal Treasures! Thus, I stop, and Bind up those Liberal Hands; And force them to Continue Close and Shut up against me: This is a most sensible Affliction, unto Thee, O my God, It touches the Tenderness of Thy Soul unto the Quick; And I find my Self, destitute of thy Blessing, by my Ingratitude.

Do not Thou withdraw thy Self from me, O Thou Omnipotent Arm! Thou God of Mercy! As Unworthy as I am of Thy Blessings, Thy Bounteous Goodness, and Liberality, is still, Infinitely Greater than My Unworthiness; Those Chains that Link thy Sacred Hands, Cannot Confine this Almighty Power; O Let that shine upon This Ungrateful Soul, of Mine, since Thou art only Bound to procure my Freedom: † *I Lift up Mine Eyes Unto Thee, O My God, who dwellest In The Heavens; As The Eyes of Servants are fixt upon the Hands of Their Masters; And as The Eyes of a Handmaid are upon the Hand of Her Mistress; Even so Our Eyes Waite upon the Lord Our God, until He have mercy on us.* V. † Psal. 123. 1, 2.

Shut, therefore, mine Eyes, O Holy Hands, *that they may not Behold Vanity!* Guide ye my Tongue, and All my Senses, that They may Remain In Subjection to thy Law! Refrain this Un-bridled Heart of mine, that It

may no longer [illegible] Thy Mercies! If I [illegible] Thy Wrath! I [illegible] Shaken off My [illegible] Chains; If I [illegible] Jer. 2. 20. [illegible] my Heart, and My [illegible] in the Integrity of my Heart, I Resume my Self Entirely to Thee! O Take me, Bind me, Manacle and Fetter me as Thou Pleasest; The Chains which Thou shalt Lend [illegible], O Hands, full of Mercy! will be [illegible] times more Pleasant to me than My Liberty.

I have Sinned, but too Long; And have taken my Swing, hitherto without Controul: It is Time, now, O My God, that Thou shouldest begin to Work thy Pleasure on me! O that I had never Escaped out of thy Hands, But Those Almighty Hands that formed me, will not Relinquish! Remember, O my God, that Those Hands have drawn me Out of Clay, to make me A Living Creature, Capable of Knowing and of *Loving* Thee: 'Tis to *Them* I owe it, that I am what I am; And if there be Any Thing, *of Good*, within me; 'tis to *Them* Alone I am Beholden for it! *Thou Hatest Nothing that Thou hast Made*; Let the Same Infinite Love that has deliver'd Thee from thine Enemies, deliver me from Mine! Preserve me, O Lord, Purify me, Reform the Work of thine own Hands, Least I should Go on to the Last, to Deface it,

Those

[illegible] by thy Grace, [illegible] Law; [illegible] Divine Commands; [illegible] Am no Less thy Creature. Now I have Trespass'd against Them, than if I Never had Committed Sin: Consider them, O my God, the Work of Thine Own Hands; Suffer me not to Spoil it; Deliver Me from my Self, And Rivet me, for ever, to thy Law, and to thy Service; Tie me Fast, unto them, by the Chains of thy Love.

How Easily doſt thou Subdue A Heart, O [illegible] when thou doſt but Make thy [illegible] by it; How Sweetly doſt thou [illegible] it, when thou Discoverest, to it, A [illegible] of thy Divine Beauties! A Faithful Soul, in this State of Banishment, where it [illegible] Nothing of thee, but only through the Dark Obſcurities, and Clouds of Faith, ſtill Soars above it ſelf; Above the Reach of the Fleſh, and the World, by thoſe Endearing, Secret Communications thou Impartest to it. VII.

Sometimes thou Tieſt it ſo cloſe, with the Knots of thy Love, that *The Whole Man* Even down ſo far as to his Senſitive Nature, Becomes Transform'd Into thy Image; Becauſe Thou Leaveſt Nothing Un-attempted, to Attract a Soul unto Thee: If it Slumbers, Thou doſt Awaken it; If it Indulges in Repoſe,

[illegible] it, Out of a Holy Jealousy; And, as [illegible] Guard thy Self up, Rather, unto It; [illegible] thinkest it but Just, and Reasonable, that it should be wholly Thine; And under This Dependance it places Its Blessedness; Looks upon Itself, as in a perfect Freedom, Under This Yoak; Because it Subsists, and is preserved *In*, and *By* Thee.

O Happy Bondage! O Amiable Chains! Why do ye not Captivate my Soul Into This Glorious Liberty! Thou dreadest to Thee, and *There*, Thou Ladest, Safety. Thou [illegible] are the happy effects of thy Love, O Thou Divine Goodness! Thou Binddest them fast unto Thee; and Thou makest them to Loose Unto The World: They Carry an Uncorrupt Heart within Them, even whilst They Remain Attach'd to This Frail, Mortal Body; And, Thou Transformest them, Entirely Into Thine Own Likeness, by the Power of Thy Holy Spirit! He that is, Thus, Link'd to Thee, Can such a Soul Wish for Any other Freedom? How at Large and Unlimited is that Soul! How free is it! How Contented!

Thou

[illegible] Thou Sweet God of Love, [illegible] and Inestimable these Charms are! [illegible] is for that Heart, which pants After them, to Express what it Feels! O Be not Thou Displeased to my Soul For, Should thou Give me All the Riches In thine Immense Treasury, and, Amongst the Longest! of thy Self, Thou wouldst Present me with Nothing that I Desire; And Should-st Thou Leave me at my Own Liberty, it would be the Greatest of thy Judgments that Could Befal me: Take me, Then, and Tie me, for ever, to Thee, O My Jesus, My Love, and My All.

VIII. But what Wonders doth thou Actuate In those Blessed Souls, whom thou thus Consecrat'st to thy Service, O thou Divine, Love! Let Him, who is Possess'd of this Sacred Transport, Express it, if He Can; That which I Feel, is this, So Soon as thou Touch-est My Soul, it Longs for that Happy State, for which, Thou doth; In So Wonderful A Manner, Manifest, the *Power*, of *Thy Grace*, In the Frailty of Our Nature: When, after thou Hast Conquer'd All the Faculties of the Soul, and Chang'd them Into the Identity of thine Own Image, Thou Cannot so Hide thy Self, and to withdraw the Chains of thy Endearing Presence, without Causing, yet all this while, to Keep them fast Engaged in thy Love; Then they Can Neither Contradict thy Force, nor desire any Refreshing Consolation Out of Thee; For their Greatest Pleasure, and their Only Comfort is To Suffer,

Suffer, And so Continue Thus That Thou Hast [illegible]

[illegible] Blessedly, Blessed Lord, is This Dis-[illegible] Quickening, O Thou my Life, Thou Only Love of My Soul! Those whom thou, Thus, Deprivest of All Inward, Sensible Consolation, In thee, are Fearful and Apprehensive of All the Enfnaring Comforts of the World; For this, they Decline Their Friends; And are afraid to Venture upon any Refreshment, from thy Creatures, or, Even to ask the Comforts of Thy Good Providence, from thy Hands; And they are Only Dis-pos'd and Qualified to *Drink of The Bitter Cup as Thou dost Drink it*: O How Admirable and Astonishing Is the Wonderful of thy Ways and Government In the Souls whom Thou Pleasest! They Fly and Avoid the Comforts of The World, as Much as the Carnal Hard Of Worldly Mind Labour to Obtain whatever is Alluring; They dread the Very Thought of Being Separated from Thee, whenever they find Themselves Relieved from Sufferings and the Cross, as Much as Weak and Feeble Souls think Themselves Abandoned, and forsaken of thy Providence, when They do not Sensibly Perceive the Illapses of thy Spiritual Refreshments and Enlivening Communications.

They, that are, Thus, Spiritually Engag'd, and Bound with the Indissoluble Chords of thy Love, May Most Truly Be Said to Enjoy A Perfect Freedom: For it

is

in Their Entire Inclination, as [illegible] after the very Manner, which Thou [illegible] Vouchsafe thy Grace unto them in: [illegible] Can find no Rest, but in doing thy Pleasure, They Seek Thee, Only, In the way That Thou Wouldst have them, and not According to Their own Will; And, Desiring, Above all Things, to find thee Reigning, In them, with an Absolute Dominion, they Yield up their whole Souls, unto thy Sway, without any Condition, or Reserve: All the Liberty, they Covet or desire, is That they May Ever have it In their Choice, and Be alway's Ready to Testifie their Loves In Suffering for thy Sake; To Taste thy Secret Joy's, or to Resign them, to have Thee Infruition, or to Want thy Comfortable Indulgence, according to The all-Wise Councils of Thy Eternal Purposes, and Decrees; Men In Nature, But More than Men In the Mighty Operation of thy Grace and Love: O Lovely Chains! Happy Servitude! O that I were Enthrall'd, after this Manner!

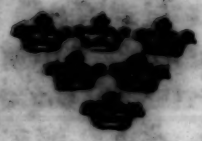
But if my Wretchedness prevents my Being the Slave of Love, O my God, Let me, at Least, Be the Subject of Hope and Assurance! Thou, O my Jesus, art an Assured Heaven, where, Wearied out, with The Storms and Outrages of This Tempestuous World, I find an Harbour, Safe; A Port and Refuge of Security: Thou art Most Faithful In thy Word and Promises; Infinitely Rich In thy Mercies; Most Bounteous and Liberal In thy Graces, and Immutable, and

Constant

Constant in Thy Love: Take me, O Lord, [illegible] Unto Thee, [illegible] Bless me, [illegible] my Wing Incline unto Thee! Let not my Heart Breath out A Single Sigh, But after Thee! And Let me find no Taste of Pleasure, no Sweet Repose, But only In thy Enjoyment, O my Love, O Thou Only Pleasure, Thou very Being of my Life! O Thou, the Only Hope, The Most Un-Bounded Wish and Expectation of my Soul.

O Most Pure Virgin, who Wast Always Captivated with The Love of Jesus; And, In Him Didst Enjoy A most Perfect Freedom; Assist me To Obtain The Favour, That I may Ever Carry These Chains, These Badges of His Service Within me; and That I may Be Eternally The Slave of *His Love*.

Ye Blessed Spirits, who, In The Abode, Seat, Of Royal Liberty, Are Tied By the Chains Of *Eternal Love*, Break These my Earthly Fetters; O Help me to Die-Engage and Free my Soul, From the Shameful Bondage under which it Groans; That I may Remain, for Ever, Fix'd, and Enamour'd of That *Divine*, That *Beautious Glory* Which, It is your Felicity To Contemplate, and Behold, World without End. *Amen*.



THE

[redacted]

THE Twenty Ninth Instance OF THE SUFFERINGS OF Our Blessed Saviour.

CHAP. XXIX.

Upon Their Dragging Him to The Judgment-Hall in Jerusalem.

THE *Blessed Jesus*, Being Now In His Enemies Hands, Humbled Himself So Low, as To Undergo All the Torments that He was, at that Time, Capable, In his Humanity, To Endure: That, of Beholding Himself, Hal'd Along, I.

Above, Instantaneous Sensible Miracle, from [illegible] Judge, Made of the Quick and The Dead, Should be arraigned as a Malefactor Before Small Men! And, that The Lord of the Universal World should be made Subject to The Sentence, and Judgment of His Creatures, Without being dragg'd from Court to Court; And Expos'd to All the Out-ragious Malice, and Injustice of His Open, and avowed Enemies!

Can any One, without Astonishment, form an Idea In His Mind, and Set Before His Imagination, *The Only Begotten Son of God, The Son of Righteousness*, The very *Essence of Sanctity*, Before Whom all Nature Trembles, at whose Word The Graves Render up Their Dead, The Devils Quit their Residence In the Possess'd, The Raging Billows of The Sea Become Smooth as Glass; To Whose Imperious Relief and all Other Invading Sickness, Both Heaven and Earth, and Hell, Submit Themselves, without Resistance, or Opposition; In whom Every Thing Commands Respect, Whose Modesty, whose Solemn Gravity, and Endearing Sweetness, So Admirably Express their Lustre In the Midst of Ignominious Chains; Can any One Behold, I Say, This M A N-G O D, after He had given Such Amazing Instances, Such Infallible

Proofs

[illegible] of His Divine Counsels, and Wisdom?

Thus He Appear'd, Therefore, Before all Those Courts of Judicature, with an Unshaken Constancy, and an Unspeakable Patience and Tranquility of Mind! He did not So Much as offer to Evade, nor make the Least Attempt to withdraw Himself, from The Justice, or, to Speak more Properly, from the Malicious Prejudices, and ill Will of His Accusers and fore-Bias'd Judges, Who Treated Him with that Scorn, that He was not So much as Thought Worthy, that the Formalities of Their Courts Should Be Observ'd where Him: * *We have Seen Him*, Says the Prophet, *He was not So Much as Regarded, Having* THE LAST, *and The most Despised of Men; One Could Scarce Know His Face, He was So Covered with Confusion.* Nothing was Left Minded among them, than to do Him Justice; These Unrighteous Judges thought of Nothing Else, but How to Glut Their Malice, and the Hatred They were Inwardly Boiling with against Him; And every where He Received Nothing But Affronts from Them.

H.

* Is. 53.

He was Led Before Four Judges; *Annas*, *Caiaphas*, *Pilate*, and *Herod*: The Two First were

[illegible] which Question they Apply [illegible] The Royal Prophet, to Him, where 'tis Said,

† Ps. 109. * *He Shall Drink of The Brook in the Way: Therefore Shall He Lift up His Head*; But, Be That as it will, Nothing is More Certain, than That this Barbarous Violence was Most Entirely Quadrate with the Malice Of The Jews.

It was About Midnight when they Enter'd Into the City, which they Put All into An Uproar; And, as Soon as it was Daylight, It was in Every Body's Mouth, what had Happen'd: Some were Astonish'd at what they had suffer'd So much Kindness to a Person Powerful in *Mighty Works*, and in Word, who had done good to all the World; others Openly found Fault with His Conduct; And Every Body Waited with Uneasiness and Impatience, to See what the End of This Tragedy would be.

They went Directly to the House of *Annas* by the Command of *Caiphas*, who Thought Fit to Express This Deference and Respect to his Father-in-Law; The first thing that *Annas* Examin'd him About, was Concerning his Disciples; He Ask'd Him, In A Sourn-ful Air, How it Came about that they had

Left

Left Him Thus Alone, Instead Of So Ac-
cusing To Subdue Him In Words Contrary,
Adding Thereunto, Other All Else Would
would Say, In A Very Little Time, When
Opinion They Ought to Have Of the
the Master, and the Disciples Tow Notwith-
standing All This, the * *Holy Jesus was Silent*, * St. Mat.
And Secretly, In his Soul, Resign'd His 26. 63.
Justification Into the Hands of His *Eternal Father*, who was to Convince the World, In His Own, Proper Time, of the Innocence and Necessity of The Cause and Sufferings of His *Only Begotten Son*.

Afterwards they Question'd Him About His Doctrine, After A most Subtile and Cunning Manner; But he Told Them, It was to no Purpose, to Ask Him about that Matter; That he had Spoke, Publickly, In The Temple; And those That had Heard Him Could Bear Witness of His Doctrine: Behold How Great the Security, of A Good Conscience, is! As It is Unmix'd, and Simple and Sincere, In All its Words and Actions, It has no Notions, of Fear, or Apprehensions About Haranguing much In its Own Defence, Because its Own Conduct and the Truth Speak for it. IV.

They that make So Much Ado, In Their Own Vindication, do not, Commonly find Themselves So *Just*, Before God Almighty, as they Strive to Appear in the View of Mankind; And all the Bustle they Make In Vindicating Themselves, Frequently, Serves

To no Other Purpose But to Give Thinking Men A Suspicion of their Being Guilty: As Good Affairs, and Innocent Intentions are the Only Things that are Capable of Making us Approved and Justified in God's Sight; when we Become Deficient in these Points, God Permits Human Eloquence to Become Unpassable to us, Even Before Men; And that They Should Determin against us, According to The Dictates of their own Notions; And not According to the Ideas we would Possess them with: Therefore the Surest way is to Trust Almighty God, And to Expect and Look for Our Justification only from His Providence, and Divine Goodness.

One of the Soldiers, Hearing the Answer, Our Blessed Saviour gave, Smote Him in the Face, Saying * *Is it Thus, Thou Answerest The High Priest?* Then, the Humble Jesus, without the Least Discomposure, Answer'd This Rude fellow, † *If I have Spoken Evil, Bear Witness of the Evil; But if Well, wherefore dost thou Smite me?* Behold with what Justice, they Treated our Blessed Saviour! He was not Permitted to Speak the Truth; And A Scoundril had The Impudence to Assaut Him, with Audacious Buffets, In the Presence of the Judge, who, Instead of Reprimanding Him, Approved of an Insolence, That would not have Been Tolerated Amongst the most Barbarous Nations.

* St. John. 18. 23.

† Ibm. v. 23.

V. The Blessed Jesus was Sent from *Annas* To *Caiaphas*, where the Chief of the Jews, The *Pharisees*,

Ministers, and Priests were Assembled: As He had Received A Blow on the Face, in the House of the first Judge, He was Charg'd with False Accusations, Under The Roof of the Second; Treated, There, as A Blasphemer, Declar'd Worthy of Death, Shut up fast in Prison, till He was Drag'd To *Pilate*, and, from Thence to *Herod*, from whom, after He had been Baffled, and Look'd on as an Ideot, He was Sent Back to *Pontius*.

That Governour, Altho' He had Declar'd the Blessed Jesus to be *No Guilty*, Commanded Him, for all that, to be Scourged In The most Cruel Manner; To be Crowned with Thorns, and, at Last, to be Crucified Between Two most Guilty Malefactors: What Inhuman Proceedings? What Justice was Here! The Blessed Jesus Underwent *All This* without Complaining; He Scarce Opened His Lips, or Spake but very Little; And the few words, He did Speak, were not to Defend Himself; And, He gave up Himself, Thus, to be Accused, Judged, and Evil-Treated without So much as Answering for Himself, whilst Their Malice Proceeded So far as to Rob Him of His Honour, and His Life.

This Affliction, of His, was Still mightily Augmented, by the Offences He saw them Committing against His Heavenly Father, and by the Inflexible Obduracy, and Harden'd Obstinacy of his Persecuters, which was the more pungent to Him, As the Tender- VI.

ness of his Love, to Them, was the more Intense and Vehement: For, He look'd upon what they Acted against Him, as *Their* Unhappiness, rather than his Own; And the Aggravation and Heighth of his Grief was that He Foresaw that what He was Suffering, *for their Salvation*, would only serve to Aggravate their Guilt, the more, And Heighten Their Damnation.

He knew, that He should, One Day, as *The Supreme Judge*, Both of The *Quick* and *Dead*, be obliged to pronounce A Dreadful Sentence againg his own Judges; and Condemn Those, to the Eternal Flames of Hell-Fire, whom He was Ready to *Save* with his precious Blood: He saw them, shut their Eyes, with the Greatest Obstinacy, against *The Light*; And their Ears to All The Saving Truths He had been Labouring to Inform them In; No mortal, unless He could Look into the Heart of the Blessed Jesus, and Behold the Perfection of his Love, could Comprehend how much more Easy it was, to the Holy Sufferer to Undergo those Painful and Ignominious Instances, of Their Injustice, than to know, that He should be oblig'd, One Day, to Sentence Them to Perdition, for the Crimes that they were, then, Actually Committing, and which they would not Expiate by Repentance.

VII. But the Blessed Jesus, who well Understood, to produce Good out of Evil, Drew out of Those Corrupted Courts, A Wonder-

ful

fit Advantage; for The Confounding of those Sacred Truths that He had Taught us For, as These Prejudiced Judges, from The Malicious Disposition of their Hearts, Easily give way to, and Believed all the Falsehoods, Calumnies, and false Depositions, with which They Endeavour'd to Blacken and Deface the Spotless Innocence of the Holy Jesus; The Malicious Wickedness of His Enemies, only Serv'd to Blazon and Give A Greater Lustre to the Purity of His Doctrine, and the Sanctity of his Works.

Malice Appear'd, at this Juncture, to Confound Itself; Envy to Shed its Poyson; Hatred to Regale, with Injuries, Affronts, Exclamations and Murmurings; yet, Still, the *Holy Jesus* Suffer'd all, with A Most Steddy, Equal Patience; And the Outrage of these Miscreants, was A Demonstration of his Innocence; Thus Truth Spoke In Silence; And His very Meekness Confounded their Malicious Craft; Because Darkness Cannot Prevaile against The *Light*, Nor Malice against Perfect Sanctity, nor yet *Falsehood* and *Untruth* against the *Eternal Truth*: But the Son of God, Thought Fit, to pass The Severity of All These Tribunals, and be In the utmost Terrours of the Rigour, of Them; That all the World might see, and be Convinc'd, that there was Nothing, In Him, but what was Pure, Holy, Perfect; And to Confirm us, by the Blackest Attempts of His very Enemies, In the *Truth* and Purity of his most Holy Doctrine.

VIII. Behold here, A very Surprising and Wonderful Information, for Those, who, On Account of the High Rank, and Glorious they Stand, in the World; Or, the Great Qualities they have, of their Own Minds, Or Some Other Human Respecting, Cannot bear it, that they who Live in A Lower Station, unto them, Should Presume to Condemning of their Actions: It is of Such as These, Our Blessed Saviour Said, * *Whosoever Doth Ill, Hateth The Light, Neither Cometh to The Light, Lest He Should be Convinced of the Evil of his Evil Actions*: In Effect, He who will not Submit to be Judged by his Inferiors, Gives Occasion to Believe, that He Confides more In The Dignity of his Person than in the Goodness of his Works; If these are not Just, Acknowledge and Confess it before Almighty God; And do not play the Hypocrite to make Thy Self Appear So to the World; Because Thou hast A Judge, who, Fathoms the Depth of the Heart; And who Sees, with How Little Justice, Thou Judgest for A Vertuous Man: But if Thou, Indeed, art A Righteous and Upright Person, doubt Take it in ill part, that Thou art Confined Wrong; If Thou Deserve Any Respect, do not Plead Thy Self, by Endeavouring To Render Thy Self Blameless, and Vanishing Thy Demerit; And if Thou Deserve None; Repent, with Patience, till The Truth Shall Manifest itself, and Appear.

* St. John. 3. 20.

Altho' your Judges Should be So Corrupt and Prostitute, as to Give Thee Just Reason,

To

Tyrants Approachesive of Their Unjustifiable Proceedings; Consider, what Advantage it is, to A Christian, to Resume Life to the Glorified Jesus; and to Suffer Wrongfully, Right Glad! We may Rest Assur'd, that if we Resign, Our Worldly Interests, to Him, He will Either Justifie, and make Known Our Innocence, to the World, by Such ways and means as we Know Nothing of; Or, If He, In his Wisdom, Permits the Malice of Our Enemies to Prevail; It is A Certain Sign, That He Reserves the Vengeance, of it, to Himself; That He has Resolv'd to Sanctifie us by Patience, And that He will, One Day, when He Shall Judge the Universal World, Render to us, In the Open View of All Mankind, that Honour, of Our Integrity, which Has been Unjustly Taken from us by A Set of the Malicious; and In the Presence of A Small Number of The Creation.

IX. The Blessed Jesus, Teaches us, Moreover, by This Silence of His (before His Malicious Judges and Unjust Accusers) which All Admire, But Few Can Conceive, and Hardly any Soul Can Imitate, to Resign Our Selves to, to Almighty God, that, for His Sake, and out of Love to Him, We desire, To Justifie Our Selves no Other Way, when we are most Wrongfully Accused, than by A Silent Resignation: He that does Sincerely Labour after A Quiet Conscience, Peace of Mind, an Abhorrence of Himself, and The pure Love of God; He, alone, Can Comprehend, how Unhappily Those Hours are

Spade, Publish and Trumpet up and down Over-Conceited Great Honour; What Treasure [illegible] with either its Own Confusion and Trouble; what Glory there is in the Light of Great Reputation in the World; And what One Looses in The Pursuit after the Opinions of Mankind: I am Sensible that the Law of God does not Oblige us to This Perfection; But I am Sufficiently assur'd, on the Other hand, How Great the Happiness of That Man is, who, only, and above all things, Endeavours to Imitate the Blessed Jesus, in what He Observes to be most perfect in him.

The Holy Prophet, Considering the profound Humiliations of the Blessed Jesus before his Judges, Tells us that * *They Refusal To do him Justice Because He was Reduc'd to Such an Abject and Low Condition*; And A Little after, adds These Words, † *And who Shall Declare His Generation?* If, Therefore, the Silence of The *Blessed Jesus*, has Produc'd so many Saints, so many Hermit's, so many Recluses from the World, who Enjoy the *Peace of Heaven*, upon Earth; And if this Single Instance of Our Blessed Saviour's Humiliation has been such A Flowing Fountain of Inward Graces to Christian Souls, can it be Possible That any One Should Practise it, Out of A True Principle, and Sincere Desire to Imitate this Heavenly Saviour, without Reaping Wonderful Fruits of Sanctity therefrom! Or that God Almighty would Vouchsafe to Discover This Great Truth to all Mankind! If He would

*Zach. 53. 8.

† Ibm.

would Inspire us with A Lively Sense and Feeling of That *Peace*, and the Riches of That Soul, which, Seriously, and In Earnest, Enters into the Way of That *Perfect Mortification*, we Should find A Paradise in This World! But Let the Man, who has not yet been Enlighten'd Into the Glory of This Divine Truth, and who Looks upon Silence, in Perfection, as an Invincible Difficulty, not to be Surmounted, Let Such A One, at Least, Endeavour to be Soft, and Moderate, In his Own Defence, and to Trust more to Gods Providence, than in his Own Righteousness.

A

Divine Contemplation,

Upon Their Dragging *Our Blessed Saviour to Their* Courts *of* Justice *in Jerusalem.*

I. IS *This* thy Place, O my Jesus! Thou Runest no more, then, these Towns, of *Judea*, over, to Propagate Thy Word, therein, and Work thy Miracles among Them! But, would it not, at Least be more Convenient for thee, to Come, and take thy Abode In Our Hearts; To be Beloved There; To be Acknowleged, Adored, than to Run from

from Our Partial Court, and Impious Tribunal to Another, where Thou Receivest Nothing Else, But Blasphemy and Outrage! Let Heaven and Earth Praise Thee, O my God! Let Every Creature Bless thy Holy Name! Let Every Soul Adore Thee, that Thou hast Humbled Thy self so Low, for my Sake! It's I, that am Laden with Guilt; And it's Thou that art Accused, Judg'd, Condemned! I Adore this Excess of Thy Love! I am Only to be Judg'd by Thee alone, who art a Judge, Always Equitable, Ever Righteous; And Thou Resignest Thy self, to the Unjust Judgments of the World, for my Sake; And, Immaculately pure, and Innocent as Thou art, Thou Consentest to Undergo the Punishments I have deserved.

There Can be No Judge too Severe upon My Account, or that Can Sentence me to such Great Pains and Torments, but that I deserve Greater: And there is none of 'em, O my Saviour! Who Can be Sufficiently Just to Thee, Or Express all that Respect, and Love which is thy Due; But, Because I have Reason to be afraid, in Every Respect, If thou should'st not Determine upon me, In Thy Mercy; Thou thy self would'st be my Judge, O Divine Goodness, Thou wouldest take the Sins that I have Committed upon Thy self, and Undergo the Rigour of the Sentence that I have Deserved.

H. It was I, O my God, and Not thine Immaculate Goodness, who Ought to have Appeared

against before those Judges; There was no-thing that Could Call for Chastisement, or with any Justice, be Cast on the Sacred Innocence, and Sanctitude of thy Person; But They Might have discharged all their Hatred, against me, with the Utmost Justice; In my Degenerate, Corrupted Nature they might Easily have found All the Offence they sought to prove In thy Sacred Person; And they might have Executed those Cruelties, without Crime, against me, which They so Unjustly put in Practise against thy Divine Innocence and Goodness! They might have torn the Eyes out of my Head, to have Punish'd the wanton Liberties of my Looks; or have Cut out this Tongue of mine which has formed out such vain Discourses; Or Mangled and Torn This Body, In a Thousand Pieces, which is so Stain'd, all over, with my Guilt, and Disfigured with Sin; or Pierc'd this Obdurate Heart, which could not be Softened, or won, by thine Endearing Goodness; Or have Sentenc'd me to Destruction for those Transgressions I have Committed so directly Opposite and Contradictory to Thy Love; Or have taken away a Life which has not been Employ'd In thy Service.

If They Look for one of The Sons of Sacrilege, who has profan'd Every Thing that's most Sacred, A Miscreant, whom the World should be rid of, I am that Wretch! But, as for Thee, O Mercy Infinite, whose Love is Inseparable to me, tho' I am never so Unworthy of it; And, who dost Sincerely De-

sire

sire My Salvation; Thou Wilt bear my Failings; and Reserve me for thy Bounty, Indulgence and Correction, whilst Thou delivered up Thy Self to the Malicious Rage of Those Impious Judges, who are resolved upon Thy Destruction; And Thou wilt be *Condemned* that I may be *Absolved*.

What Shall I say, O my Sovereign Judge, of such a Change, which can only proceed from an Infinite Bounty! Thou knowest well, for whom it is Thou art finishing this Mighty Work; O Let not so great a Mercy Become In Vain unto me! Lead Thou My Heart along with Thee, before the Tribunals of Those Unjust Judges! Enlighten it with those Sacred Truths with which Thou There dost Inform it; Impart to it those Divine Vertues, of which Thou thy self art There its Pattern, In the Practice of them: Enflame it with Thy Love, that it may be Ravished with thy Sweetness, and be Enamour'd of Thee, and Adore Thee, amidst All the Blasphemies, and Outrages that surround Thee, and are thrown against Thee, In that Mock-Place of Judgment.

III. Ye Cruel and Unjust Judges! Did you but know whom you have in your Hands, You would look upon Him, your selves, as Your Judge; And, prostrate at his Feet, you would implore his Mercy: But there is no Justice left for Thee, O my God! On Thy Account alone, All Laws are Violated, And Every Judge Corrupted! Inform me, O

Lord

lously in this Divine Mystery, This Wisdom so unknown to The World, that, in imitating Thee, By Silence I may Overcome; By Meekness Triumph, And be, in like manner, Justified by Thee, when I am unjustly Censured by The World.

But I am so deep in Guilt, O My Redeemer, that Every Thing I see Thee suffer is an Evidence against me, and Inwardly Condemns me! I am worse than thy very Judges; For, the Truth is, They do not know who thou art; But as for me who do know Thee, who Adore Thee, who Profess Faith In thy Holy Doctrine, who Praise and Admire thy Mighty Works; I am Refractory to Thy Will, I despise thy Law, I Arraign Thee as much, Before those Wicked, Prostituted Judges, as My depraved Passions prompt me to.

How Often have I failed In that Awful Respect I Owe Thee, O Thou Heavenly Majesty! altho' I knew that Thou wast within me, and that thou didst warn me with the Impulse of Thy Presence! was not This to Smite Thee like that Insolent Soldier, to Stifle thus Thy Voice, and oblige Thee to be Silent, to Let my Passions loose to Speak against thee! How often, like Another *Annas*, that *Profligate Arch-Priest*, have I Condemn'd thy Doctrine, to Justifie my Own Evil Appetites, and Irregular Passions! How often, have I Slighted it, as a foolish Doctrine, what Thou hast Endeavour'd to

Inculcate

humbled to me, Contending the Contempt of the World; And, by false Judgments, dishonour'd Thy most Sacred Truths, to follow the Corrupt Inclinations of my own depraved Heart?

Mercy, O Lord, Mercy! on me! I am Loaded, over-burthened with Sin! And Thou art Innocence itself; Nevertheless Thou art Dumb, and I justifie my Self! Thou Suffersest, without Complaining, All the Injuries and Injustice of those Enemies; and I murmur and Repine at the most Trifling offence! Thou Labourest with Love, Even towards those very Creatures, who Treat thee so Unworthily, so far as to Lay down thy Life, for them; And, as for me, I pass my Life, Under a Disposition of Sorrow, and ill-natur'd Malice, when I meet with the smallest Instances of Disrespect, which the Pride and Haughtiness of my Heart Suggests to be due to me; Thou Suffersest All the World to Judge and Condemn Thee, But I think my Self too Great to Suffer Reprimand from any Person whatsoever.

O when shall I see this Heart of Mine Transformed, and Changed, O Thou Shining Beauty! when shall I See Thee, for ever, stand before my Eyes, O Thou Dear Spouse and Bridegroom of my Soul, That in All Things I may follow Thy Example! And O when shall I make it the Chief of my Concern to be like Thee, Rather than to Sooth Mankind and Gratifie the World!

Let

Lest that vain Presumption, that I Entertained thy own Merit, Vanish, and be at an End, O Thou, my God, my Redeemer, and my Sovereign! I heartily Confess, and Bewail my Ingratitude, and my Pride, Before Thee! It is my Sincere Desire, by the Assistance of Thy Grace, to Imitate Thee, and Suffer All Sorts of Tryal and Temptation, without any Murmuring or Reply; There is none Can Attach me, but what Thou Sendest, or what Thou dost permit; And it is my Duty to Adore and Bless Thee, Even for whatever thou permittest me to be try'd withal. From this Moment, therefore, I consent that Every Creature should rise up against me, to Revenge the Guilt, In which I have most justly Offended Thee!

I am very well Assured, O my God, that had'st not Thou prevented Them, and kept them Back, They would Arm Themselves, at this Instant, to Destroy so Perfidious and Ungrateful a Wretch, as I am: But, Since it has been thy Goodness to Defend me, O Let me never more be thine Enemy: Begin Thou the Work of my Conversion, this very Day, and Transform me into thine Image, O Thou Sovereign Perfection, Teach me to Love those that Hell-Treat me, who Condemn me, who Ruin me; Since herein Consists The *Divine Wisdom*, which Thou Teachest.

Thy Holy Prophet *Isaiah* was Struck with Amazement, when, In the Spirit, He Beheld

hold those Wonderful Effects, of the Gift of Humility, which thou producest in the Souls of Men, by Submitting thy Self, with Such Resignation, as Thou didst, to Such Corrupted Judges: But, what Great matter, would it be, to wonder at, if A Sinner, Like my Self, is Submissive to his Judge, after he has Beheld the Great Judge Both of The Quick and Dead, Humble Himself, so Low, before his Sinful Creatures! And yet, after all, I do it not; And I Cannot do it but by Thy Grace; Do thou, Therefore, Gracious Lord, Work in me, that which Thou Desirest of me; Give me what Thou Requirest, that whenever Thou Shalt Seek me, Thou mayst Always find me Ready to Accomplish thy most Holy will.

V. Let him, that for thy Sake, O my Jesus, Beholds Himself Loaded with Chaines, Despised by the World, Dishonour'd In All Places, Condemned by the Vogue of Mankind; And who, Amidst These Opprobrious Outrages, finds Himself Supported by thy Example; Calm, and Easy, and Composed; Smiling, and Content, by the Unction of thy Spirit, United unto Thee by pure Charity and Love; How Rich is He! I say, How Happy is He! when shall it be, that Every Interiour Faculty of my Soul, shall Address Thee, and with Sincerity shall say, O my God, my Sovereign Felicity, my Plenitude, my Consummation of All Bliss, Come Into my Heart, Enter Thou Into the Soul of this Miserable Sinner, who most Ardently desires

Seek that thou should'st find thy Abode in Him.

Is it not high Time that Thou should'st Quit the Baneful Tribunals of those Malicious Judges so Incens'd against Thee? If thou delightest to be among the Wicked, I am more Guilty than they! If thou Seekest for Humiliations, Thou wilt find them Heaped on my Oppressed Spirits! If thou makest it thy Choice, to go where there are poor Sinners to be Converted, and their failings to be Corrected, Thou wilt find Enough, In me, to Exercise thy Zeal, and the Utmost Ardour of thy Charity! If it be thy Gracious Purpose to Bestow some favour on me, Come, Blessed Lord, Come Thou Thy Self; for Thou Alone, art Sufficient for me; Enter Thou Into my Heart, O pure, penetrating *Light!* It is *There* that I shall take thee Into my Arms, and Embrace Thee! And I shall not say, with the *Patriarch*, that * *I will not Let thee Go, till Thou hast Given me thy Blessing*; But with thy Spouse, † *I hold my Love, and I will not Leave Him, nor Let him go*: When wilt Thou Come, *O my God!* When shall I See Thee, *O Light of my Eyes! O my Dear! my Delight!*

* Gen. 32. 36.
† Cant. 3. 4.

If the Result and Consequence of An Unjust Sentence, Pronounc'd against Thee, and Received by Thee, with Such an Amazing Air of Sweetness and Humility, be, according to what that Holy Prophet did foretel, ‖ *That thou should'st find many Lost Sheep, many*

‖ Isa. 53. 11.

Wandering Souls, Run astray, many Children who would Love Thee, many that were Blind, whose Eyes Thou Shouldst Open to Behold Thee, many A Sinful Soul That Should be Converted To desire Thee, and who Should Enjoy Thee; Remember, that I am the most Lost Creature, and the most Forlorn of all thy Flock; Seek me, Therefore, O Lord, Let me hear thy Call, put me in the Right way, Keep me Near unto Thee, O Thou Charitable Shepherd! I Own Thee, I Adore Thee, I would Fain Yield up my very Soul to Thy Endearing Goodness, O Cleanse me, Guide me, and form me into what Shape and Image Thou would'st have me.

VI. How Happy must I be In Thy Hands, O my Redeemer! But How Cruelly art Thou Treated, Under the Mercy of Thine Enemies! Thou, Seeing thy Self, before them, Oppress'd with Chains, did'st not Open thy Lips unto them, In thine own Defence; And tho', In their outrages against Thee, They had no Regard to Any Laws or Rules of Honesty, or Justice; Thou did'st Resign thine Innocence to their Execrable Judgments, as if Thou had'st Expected an Acquittance, and Safety from them: And yet for my Part, I have not the Faith, nor Courage to Resign my Self to Thee, O Thou, Generous, and most Compassionate Judge of Souls! I have the Assurance to plead my Cause Continually, before thee, to make Complaint, and Utter Grievance, and be heard, and Obtain Mercy!

My

My Cause Becomes in a Better Condition, Even by Thosy means; when Once It's Lodged in thy Hands; And yet I am so Infatuate and Blind, that I would Fly Thee! And prefer the Opinion of the Uncertain World, to the Merciful Determinations of thy Gracious Providence and Goodness.

All Mankind Endeavours To Do me Prejudice; There's None but thy Self, Alone, O Thou, who art as much my Father as my Judge, who hast Sincerely Sought to do me good, And given me All Necessary Qualifications and Assistance to Obtain A Favourable Sentence; Shall I then Estrange my Self from Thee? Lord! I Return to Thee; I Submit my Self unto Thee; I Resign, I Abandon my Self to Thee; O Take me into thine Arms; Lock me Close in thy Heart; Unite me to thy Spirit; Subject me and Conform me to thy Blessed Will; that, for the Future, I may Only Live in Thee and for Thee; That I may Abhor my Self, And, that I may for ever Love Thee, O my God, my Judge, my Shepherd, And the Only Hope, and Expectation of my Soul!

O *Most Pure*, and *Undefiled Virgin-Mother* of The *Living God!* This Our Heavenly Redeemer has Always Reign'd In Thee! And Never found A Perfect Rest and Peace, here Below, but Only in Thy Sacred Person! Thou art the Mother of Sinful Men! Assist, the Greatest of 'em All, who Presents Himself before Thee! Open thy Parental Bowels to my Soul; And Vouchsafe to use Thy Interest with thy Son, In my Behalf, to Obtain, of Him, the Grace, Sufficiently To Comprehend Those *Divine Truths* He has Taught me; that for the Time to Come, they may be the Only Rule of my Life and Conduct.

O Ye Celestial Quire, who, Incessantly Behold the Majesty of This God of Lowliness and Meekness; And who, In Security, Enjoy the Blessed Fruits of his Labours; Beseech Him, for my Sake, to Vouchsafe me A Particle of that *Divine Spirit*, with which you are Replenish'd, That thro' his Humiliations, I may be Imputed Worthy of A Share of that Heavenly Bliss, and Glory, which you Eternally Enjoy. *Amen.*

THE

[redacted]

THE Thirtieth Instance OF THE SUFFERINGS OF Our Blessed Saviour.

CHAP. XXX.

In The False Accusations they Contriv'd and Uttered Against Him.

[redacted]UR Blessed Saviour was no Better Treated, In the Hall of *Caiaphas*, Than He Had Been In That of *Annas*: He Suffer'd many Wrongs There, by the False Accusations they Laid to his Charge: No One can Conceive, Un- I.

lest He has Experienc'd it, How very Sensible this Affliction is, to an Innocent, and Unspotted Mind: The Same [illegible] Hour to the High Priest's House, where, [illegible] Impatience, They Expected Nows from those whom they Had Sent To Apprehend the Blessed Jesus, being always under the Apprehension that He would Escape them: But when they were Acquainted with the Success of this Adventure, They were Extremely Over-joy'd; But they were much more Transported, when they Saw the Blessed Jesus Brought, A Prisoner, before them, which they Express'd and Testified by their Outcries and Exultations.

They Question'd him, in the first Place, about his Life and Doctrine; But Both the One and the Other were so Holy, and Unexceptionable, that all the Malice of his Enemies could find Nothing, there, to Tax him with; They, Therefore, Raised up False Witnesses, against Him, that, by Falsehood, they might give some Colour and Appearance of Justice, to that Sentence of Death They were Resolv'd To Pronounce against Him.

II. There were many False Accusations Laid against him, as that he had Spoken Blasphemy, against the Temple of God, by Saying * *That He would Destroy it, and, Within Three* Day's, He would Build it up again; Altho' he only Spake Concerning the Temple of his Body; And that they, Themselves, would be

* St. John. 2. 19.

be Convinced of it, Since, They, themselves, Demanded Soldiers of *Pilate*, to Guard Our Blessed Saviour's Sepulcher, On Account that He had Promised to Rise again The Third Day.

Others Accused Him of Forbidding The Paying of Tribute unto *Cæsar*, Although, on the Contrary, He had Clearly decided The Matter, by Declaring it their Duty to * *Render Unto Cæsar the Things that are Cæsar's*; And had Sent St. *Peter*, to Take Out A Piece of Mony, from the Entrails of A Fish, which He had Occasion for, to Comply with This Obligation: There were not Wanting Some, who Accused Him of having Made Himself A King; Altho' All the World was Sensible How He had hid Himself, when Five Thousand Men, whom He had Fed, by A Miracle, In the Desert, would Have Invested Him with That Honour.

* St. Matt. 22. 21.

There were many Other Crimes, of The same Nature, They Laid to his Charge, that had not the Least Appearance of Truth in Them: But the Less Guilty They Found Him, the More Zealous thy were to Destroy Him; And not being able to Find Out the Least Spot or Blemish in so Pure A Light, nor The Least Irregularity in Such A Holy Life, they Endeavoured, by Questioning, to Trepan Him in his Words: † *And the High Priest Said unto Him, Answerest Thou Nothing*, to what These Evidence Depose against Thee? ‖ *But Jesus was* Silent: For,

† St. Mat. 26. 62.

‖ Ibm.

He Knew how Divine it would have been for Him to Pray with 'em; Besides, that He would Neither Speak nor do any Thing That might hinder the Accomplishment of That Sacrifice of Himself, He So much Thirsted After: He was also Desirous to Teach us, by his Own Example, how we Ought To Despise The Malice of Men; When The Purity of Our Conscience, Brings HIM, on Our Side, who is The *Invincible Protector*; And The Most Assured Refuge Of His Servants.

Caiaphas, finding that He Could not move the Holy Jesus to Open his Lips, made Use of the most Effectual Means, of all Others, to Oblige Him to Break Silence which was THE NAME OF GOD: *I Adjure Thee*, Says He, *By The Living God, that Thou Tell us Whether Thou Be The Christ, The Son of God.* This Question was of Such A Nature, that One Might have Expected, The Answer, to it, would have Chang'd the Aversion of The High Priest Into Adoration; And That He would have been so far from Passing any Sentence against The Holy Jesus, That He would have Condemn'd Himself to Deplore, all his Life Time, what He had Already Committed against Him: But when the Heart of Man is, Once, Determin'd unto Malice, It Turns Every Thing, that's Capable of Curing it, Into Poyson: It was, Nevertheless, The Will of God, by an Inscrutable Disposition, of His Eternal Wisdom, to make use of So Unworthy An Instrument, As This

Wicked

Wicked and Unsanctified Priest way, to give an Opportunity to the Blessed Jesus, to Manifest more Expressly than He had yet done, The *Divinity* of *His Person*, before the Face of his most Inveterate and Cruel Enemies; And to Leave us, before his Death, so Necessary an Assurance, of whom He was.

To This Adjurement of the High-Priest, The Holy Jesus, having more Regard to the Name of God, By whom he was Conjured to Speak, and to the Benefit of his Church, which he would Instruct, than to All the Mischief which his Answer could Bring upon Him, Reply'd In plain Terms * *You have said it, I am so; And I do Assure you, that ye shall one day see the Son of Man Coming In the Clouds of Heaven, Sitting on the Right-hand of the Power of God.* For Altho' These Reprobates are not Predestinated ever to Behold the Glories of the Divine Essence; Yet shall they all, and Every Soul, at *the General Resurrection*, Behold the *Blessed Jesus*, In his Humanity, Sitting at the *Right-hand of God*, Encompassed with Glory and Great Majesty, Coming to Judge his own Judges, as much to the Confusion of them, as Joy and Transport to the Righteous and Blessed.

* Ibm. v. 64.

The Wicked *Caiaphas*, who had not Questioned our Blessed Saviour, for the Improvement of Any Faith In Him, But to pick out an Occasion to Condemn Him, having heard this Answer, Rent his Clothes (according to the *Jewish* Custom, who, thereby, Express the

* Rom. 2. 24. (with Utmost Indignation) said * *Cry'd out*, *Saying, Blasphemy! Blasphemy! What Further Need have we of Witnesses, Behold* Now *ye have Heard His Blasphemy! What Think ye of it?* Is onto the Opinion of 'em all, that He deserv'd to Die; Which was the Resolution They had Taken Concerning Him, some Time Before.

IV. But this did not Appear to be A Sufficient Ground to go upon for Them to Crucifie Him, according To the Design they had formed: For, as They were not Allow'd, according to their Law, to put One to Death, They Wanted the Authority of *Pontius Pilate*, who being A Gentile, and an Idolater, had no great Regard to the Law, and Religion of the *Jews*; Therefore, Seeing they Could not Compass their Desires, But by Imaginary Crimes; And that their Accusation, of the Blessed Jesus, In Saying that He Blasphem'd, by calling Himself *The Son of God*, would make no great Impression upon the Mind of *Pilate*, They Resolv'd to Joyn Two more Articles Of Impeachment, against Him, Which were Expresely Capital; The One was, that He had forbid the Paying Tribute to *Cesar*; And the Other, His having Raised A Sedition among the People, by Pretending to make Himself A King: They Aggravated these Two Forgeries, also, Before the Roman President, with great Out-cry's and Exclamations, whilst the Patient Jesus, did not so much as Speak A Single Word, in his Own Defence; According To that Prediction of

Isaiah

Isaiah. * *He is Brought as A Lamb to the Slaughter; And as A Sheep before her Shearers is Dumb, So He Opened not his Mouth.* * Isa. 53. 7.

Let every One Judge by Himself, How very Sensible This Affliction was to the Suffering Jesus; And how Invincible his Patience appear'd under it: For, we thus See, that He that has Undergone great Afflictions, and Sharp Agonies with A Steddy Constancy, and Invincible Resolution, cannot yet without much Difficulty fortifie Himself against A Severer Tryal of *False Accusations*: It's A Rare thing, to see A Person Labouring under this Temptation, without Complaining; And There are but Few Vertues which are Proof against Unjust Calumny and Reproach: when any Suffering Soul is Try'd with this Affliction, and Bears it without Expostulation, and in A Silent Resignation, It is Entirely Out of A Strict Sense of the Infinite Obligations he is under to his Suffering Redeemer; And, Because he is Conscious to Himself of His being Over-Laden with his Sins, He therefore Patiently Endures the False Revilings of the World, to Attone, in some Measure, for his Real guilt! But the Blessed Jesus Knowing Himself Immaculate and without Spot, and being Under no Obligation to Those for whom He Suffer'd, He could not Possibly have any Motive, To Undergo These False Accusations, But, Purely, out of That Infinite, unbounded Love, and Charity he had for us.

This

V. This Truth is so Secure, That those who do Fear God, and would not allow Themselves the Least Inclination to Revenge, have not the Power to forbear Complaining, when they are upbraided with the guilt of Those Crimes which they have not Committed! We may Take Notice of this, Sometimes, in Those, who, in all Other Respects, are very Mortified, and who yield up Themselves, Without any Reluctancy, To every Other Instance of Tryal and the Cross; But when they meet with This Encounter, they cannot forbear Opposition, and to Set Themselves against it, even so far as to Look upon Themselves as Bound in Conscience, for the Sake of God's Glory, for the Honour of vertue, to Prevent Scandal, to Maintain The Authority of Religion, to Undeceive The World, to Engage even the Secular Powers, with the utmost Zeal, in Their Justification.

I am very Sensible, that Our Blessed Saviour does not forbid us to Justifie Our Selves, and that He does not Lay us Under any Positive Obligation to Such A High Perfection, tho' He Practis'd it the First; But He who makes Profession of Following Him, Ought to Rest Satisfied in this Truth, that Our Gracious Redeemer, has Set no Example of Vertue before us, which has any Relation to The Moral Conduct of Life, which is not Practicable by us, if We'll be in Earnest, how Perfect and Heroick soever it appears to be.

And

And Let none Object, that there are such Powerful Reasons on the Contrary; that Besides that they must always appear very Weak and Enervate, in Respect to those which The Holy Ghost Infuses into Souls withal; This Truth is Confirm'd by The Actions of Apostolick Men, and the Lives of the most Illustrious Saints: Let those, therefore, who have no Taste, or Relish of so Sublime a Doctrine, Humble Themselves Before Almighty God, whose Bountiful Goodness, In Compliance with their Weakness, does not Oblige Them Strictly to so Great a Perfection of Vertue; But Let them Esteem it in Others, and Desire it, in Themselves, with so much the more Ardour as they find Themselves at a Distance from it.

VI. Let us Learn from this Our Divine Master, that the True means to preserve our Honour, is, to Lead a Life so Holy, as to give no Occasion of Offence or Scandal to our Neighbour; For, according to St. Augustin, * "*He is Great, who Compared with the* "*Testimony of his own Conscience, Neglects his* "*Reputation in the World*: This Holy Father was of Opinion that We Ought not to be too Eager in the Pursuit, nor too much Concerned at the Loss of it; But that we Should Take Particular care to Preserve it, by an Holy, Pious, and Exemplary Life. A Visible and Open Modesty, an Inward Communication with God, an Unalterable Sweetness of Disposition, A calm and Quiet Resignation, Patience in Adversity, A Due Observation

* Epist. 204. ad Donat.

* Philip. 2. 7.

this Great Moral Law, A Constant Attendance to the Duties of Our Calling, An Obstinate Inclination towards Good, An Implacable Aversion to All Evil, and Other the Like Virtues, will Gain the Esteem of Mankind without Seeking it, any other way, And Confound Detraction, and the Revilings of the most Malicious Men.

Thus it was that The Malice of The Jews was Confounded, without putting our Blessed Saviour to the Expence of Saying One Single Word, In his Own Vindication; And He that will be so prudent as to follow this Method, will always Walk Securely, and Out of the Reach of the most Malicious Tongues.

I must Confess, that to know how to Bear Reproaches, without Remonstrance, or Defending Ones Self only by Silence and Resignation, is a Secret very Difficult to be Comprehended, and Understood but by a very few; It Is True, that This is A very great Perfection; And the Weakness of Frail Nature cannot Arrive at so Sublime a State without an Extraordinary measure of the Gifts of Grace: But we must Acknowledge also, that This Happy Condition is Enrich'd with Heavenly Treasures, and Establish'd in a Region of * *Divine Peace, that Surpasses All Imagination.* No Creature Can Express it, but such a Refined Soul as had Experience of it; And felt the Divine Influxes flowing in upon it: It is Sufficient to Say, here, In Conclusion of

* Philip. 4. 7.

of This Disease; that the *Blessed Sufferer* Endeavour This Pain, which was, perhaps The Greatest of his Life, with the Resignation, so much the more to be Admired, as it was Less Visible; And, that He has promised, to All Those who shall Imitate his Example, In this Heroick Silence, A *Throne of Glory*, upon which they shall Judge Their Enemies at *That Great Day!*

A

Divine Contemplation,

Upon The False Accusations of the JEWS.

O Jesus; Thou *Glory* of the *Just*, Their *Way*, Their *Truth*, and Their Life! There is No Instance of Injustice, and Wrong, But Thou hast Undergon it, out of Love to Me! Thou hast Even Suffered False Witnesses to arise against Thee, *O Truth Eternal!* I Adore Thee, *O Immaculate, Supreme Purity!* I Adore Thee, *O Son* of the *Father Eternal!* O *My God!* My *King!* The Malicious World, Could *That* find *any Fault*, or *Blemish* in Thee? Could it Object *Any Crime* against Thee, without the Utmost Guilt of

Blasphemy.

Mysterious, and *Profound*? Yet these Reasons will have it, that thy Doctrine is Erroneous, and Thy Life Irregular! How Contrary is this Injury to the Truth of what Thou art, O WORD DIVINE! But How Wonderful is thy Patience? Those Sufferings that I Behold, of Thine, Ought They not to make me Love Thy Cruel Outrages, and to make me Swell with Joy, whenever I am so Happy as to be Treated in the same Manner!

How different do I find my Self from Thee, O my *Redeemer*! How Sensible of the Least thing that's said In Prejudice to my Character, And How do I Loose All Remembrances of Thee, upon the Least Unjust Reflection I meet withal, or that Strikes upon my Reputation! Therefore it's plain, O Thou most Perfect Model of all Truth and Righteousness, That I Rather Choose to be Esteemed by the World, than to *Take up my Cross and Follow Thee*! The Utmost Malice of Man Cannot Impeach Thee of Any Imperfection or Failing without doing thee wrong; For, *There is no Fault in Thee*! But when even *They Lay to my Charge Things that I know not*, Then Seest A Thousand Instances of Guilt upon me, whose Voice against me would be just!

II. Thou knowest, O my God, who Seest into the Bottom of the Heart, that if Man Could See, as thou Seest, The Abomination of my Thoughts and perverse Inclinations, I should Become the just Object of their Horror and Contempt!

Obstinate! Let Them Treat me with as much Contempt and Indignity as They will, It will be always too Favourable, what I meet with, upon that Account, in Compare with what they would with Justice do, were They but Let into the View of those Secret Trespasses, I have Committed against Thy Bounteous Goodness, and All those Instances of Ingratitude and Guilt that I must needs Confess, before Thee! Although Thou hid'st my Shame, from the World, which thy providence might Easily Expose, and Discover to it; So Great is the Pride within me, that I Still put a Value upon my Self; and am Even Seeking Opportunities to Justifie my Self before Men; that I cannot Bear the Least Reflexion to be made on my Reputation; that I am asham'd to be Like my God, that I fancy, my Self, Sufficiently Qualify'd with the Grace of Meekness and Humility, when I do but Sustain the Least Disgrace, without Murmurming and Complaint, tho' I have Beheld thee Loaded with All possible Reproach and Ignominy whatsoever.

Thou Teacheſt me to Defend my Innocence and Honour, no Other way than by keeping a Concience Always pure and Void of Offence, by the Innocence of Life, by the Holiness of my Converſation, and Patience under Temptations, and Wrongs: And I, with a Conſcience, Such as Thou Behold'ſt it, Deficient of all Worth and Vertue, am Labouring to defend my Self, by my Impatience, and by making a Noiſe, and doing

my Self, [illegible] a fort of Wanton [illegible] Defiance, [illegible] me, O Lord, and preserve me from making Use of any other Method than that which Thou hast pointed out upon me: Imprint These Truths, Thou Teachest me, Deep upon my Heart; and Give me Grace to Understand how Indispensably Necessary they are to my Felicity.

III. Do thou Root out of my Heart, all that Over-weening Fondness, and Over-Value of my Self, and of the Opinion of the World, I Cherish in me; Am not I an Infatuate, Wretched Creature, to Value any thing so, Infinite Like, that thou hast Despised? Sometimes I fancy that I am Labouring after that which is for thy Glory, when, at the Same time, the main Purpose of it is, for my own Reputation or Advantage; And I flatter my Self that Thou Wouldst be Offended with me, were I to put up Reproach without doing my Self Justice: Where is, then, my Reason? Where is my Discretion and my Prudence? If thy Wisdom be True O Lord, why should I thus Suspect it? And if I Acknowledge and Adore it, In thee, How is it that I rather Walk In Darkness? From whence, that I am not fixed and Unshaken In my Resolutions, that by being Silent, that by Suffering for Thy Sake, that by a Total Resignation of the Care of my Reputation to to thy Ever-wonderful Providence I shall Acquire more Glory, my Vertue will meet with more Esteem; and my Integrity be better

Known,

Heaven, then [illegible] Contrary Mists and Shades to Darkness.

Permit me, *O Almighty Author! O Eternal Wisdom!* To Enquire of thee, where That Enlightening Grace, So Powerfully Illustrious, and yet so Obscure, Resides? It is Covered from my Eyes, by a thick Darkness! I know there is such a Glory, But I do not see it, Because All its Splendour is Shut up in Thee! There can be no Discovering of it, nor can it be tasted but by Love: And the Experience, thou Vouchsafest of it, to those, who are Sincerely touch'd with a desire of imitating Thee: Vouchsafe me, therefore, O my God, some Small Taste of this Holy Zeal, and Love, which, and only which, Can Let in, a Soul, to Comprehend Those Truths, that are so Sublime, So far above all Human Conceptions! Teach me to Abandon, and Resign my Self to Thee, with an Heart that's Pure and Generous, that I may be Capable of Beholding this Divine and Heavenly Glory, that I may pursue it, and that I may be for Ever Enlighten'd and Directed by it.

IV. Would I but Endeavour, In Earnest, to become like thee, what harm could happen to me? What is this World? What Obligations have I to it? Of what Advantage can it be to me? Wherefore, then should I be ashamed to keep Strict to my Example, out of any fond desire to Win the Favour of it? The World Judges Blindly; It Approves

and Grandeur, [illegible] Splendor or Wealth; it [illegible] promised Great Matters, but performs Nothing: It Smiles us Only to our Perdition; And All its Highest, Honours are but a vain Shadow of Vapour, which Vanishes in a Moment, as a Shadow! But the *Glorious Recompence of Reward* that Thou hast promised, is Everlasting, and Eternal, as thy Self.

Thou hast Promised and *Thou art Faithful in thy Word!* Thou art Incorruptible in thy Judgments, and most Liberal in thy Rewards! Thou Loadest Those with thy Blessings, who Suffer for thy Sake; And Thou Inspirest those, who are dispos'd to Walk in thy Steps, with the Ineffable Balms of thy Enlivening Spirit; And yet, Still, I Fly Thee to follow the World; I prefer its Transitory Pageantry to thy Solid Glories; And Rather Choose to Become a Slave, to the Vanity of Human Opinions, than to the Immutable Veracity and Never-failing Truth of Thy Words.

How Long shall This Deprav'd, Eccentrick Disposition, in me, Last, O Thou *Mercy Infinite!* And when shall I Rejoyce to find that Change Within me, that Thou desirest in my Soul! There is Nothing, in me, O my God, which can Render me Worthy of the Honour of Resembling Thee; And the utmost of my Merit, is, to Undergo Those Torments thou hast Endured for my Sake! Change Thou my Heart, O, Almighty Father!

that I I am ashamed, as for my Self, for Our selves in my Nature as Thou! And, that I don't pay that Respect, I Owe to the Divine Truths which Thou dost Teach me.

But, Behold, O Lord, the Resolution I make this very Day: By the Assistance of thy Grace, I fully Purpose, for the Time To come, to Bear all the False Accusations, all the Calumny's, and all the Injuries that shall be Laid upon me: From the Bottom of my Heart, I forgive all Those who have done me Wrong, or who shall hereafter, Offer me any Injury whatsoever! For thy Sake, I Dispense with them, from Restoring me that Reputation they have Taken from Me; and I desire no Greater, no Other Honour Than that of Serving My God! Do not Thou, Gracious Lord, call any on, to account, but not Thine Hand be Lifted up against him, for any Outrage he has offer'd to my Name or Person; Do good, to them that Persecute me, for the Evil They have done me, and deny Them not Thy Mercy and Loving Kindness, for The Malicious hatred they have born against me. V.

But if This Request, of Mine, is not, yet, Generous Enough, and Extended as far as Thou Wouldst have it, Open Thou, then, and Expand my Heart, Wide, by thine own Charity! Do not hide the Beams of Thy *Light* from me! Soften the Hardness of My Heart; Destroy all the Sentiments of Bitterness, and Revenge, in me, that, in Thy

lative, I may Wish Those that are most Regardful of my Salvation, Great may, or Supreme have the good Opinion of the World, as it shall be most Conducible to thy Glory; But, Let it be so, as to Root out of my Heart all Vanity and Self-Esteem, and, that if it be for Thy glory that I should meet with any Reputation, in the World, I may Never Loose the Sincere desire of Contempt and Humiliation.

VI. But what do Thine Enemies say against thee, O Infinite Purity! Permit me, O Lord, that, whilst these *Reprobates* are Maliciously Condemning and Judging thee, I may acknowledge Thee, and Adore thee for what Thou art! They say that Makest thy Self The *Son of God*; And accuse thee of a Sacrilegious Usurpation: They Deceive Themselves, O my Supreme Good! It is not Unjustly that thou Takest upon thy Self the Quality of the *Son of God!* For thou art, in Truth, *God of God*, Begotten from all Eternity, and Engendred in the Bosom, of *God the Father*: As for me, O Lord, Prostrate before thy Divine Majesty, Hidden under that Sacred Humanity, with which Thou didst Condescend to Invest thy Self, for my Salvation, I Adore Thee with all that Strength of Faith, with all that Warmth of Love that I am capable, of doing it, as the *True* Son of God; *As God Eternal*; *God Omnipotent*, *Infinite in Wisdom*, *Infinite Goodness*, Inconceivably Puissant, and Equal, in all Things, to God *thy Father!*

Let

Let Blind, Infatuated Fools Dispute they Will, Thou art my Holiness, my Blessedness, my Greatness, and my Glory! The Cherubim and Seraphim adore thy Majesty, all the Court of Heaven Acknowledge Thee; and I who am but a Worm, a Reptile of the Earth! I Joyn in with them, and the whole Creation, and I Worship thee as my *God*; and as, the *Only Begotten Son* of the Eternal Father! Thy Works Sufficiently Testifie of thee, thy Miraculous Operations Impress thy Stamp upon all Nature, and make it Sensible who thou art! There is Nothing But the Malice and Infinitous Blindness of Men, that does not Confess, and declare thy Majesty.

But when thou shalt Communicate to my Soul, all Blind as it is, One Radiant Particle of thy Divine Glory, O thou Eternal Beauty; Ah! How Clearly Will it, then, Perceive that Thou art the True Son of God! And How will the Impulse, of thy Holy Spirit, Stamp upon me the Idea of thou Heavenly Idea, in a most Comfortable, and Transporting Manner! When Will the Day come, When my Transported Soul, Ravish'd with thy Beauty, shall Cry unto thee, *Thou art my God, my Lord*, and my Love! When will that Happy Moment come, when I shall Delight in Nothing, value Nothing, but Thee, O my Sovereign Felicity! O Center of my Rest!

Thou art Condemned as Worthy of Death Because, they Said, Thou didst Endeavour VII.

To [illegible] thy [illegible] a King: Although [illegible] [illegible] did appear, upon Earth, with any Pomp of Royalty, but didst ever Conceal and Hide the Glory of Thy Majesty from the Eyes of the World, that Thou Mightest not Seem to be What Thou art; [illegible] the Sea Became Consolidate, under thy Feet; and Smooth as Grass, upon the Least Token of thy Pleasure; When Death, and the Graves Obey'd thy Voice; when The Legions of Devils, at thy Command, came Out of them that were Possess'd; When Sickness Fled at thy Almighty Power; all These Creatures, However inanimate, and insensible, did They not Plainly Acknowlege Thee for their King? I Own Thee for mine, also, O Divine Jesus! And I Adore Thee, for ever, as my Almighty God, my Sovereign Lord, and Redeemer!

Thou Rulest me by thy Wisdom; Thou Chastisest me in thy Justice; Thou Forgivest me in thy Mercy; Thou instructest me in thy Law; Thou Enricheſt me in thy Bounty; and thou Protectest and Defendest me by thy Power; From whence comes it, then, that The Jews Look on Thee as a Pretended King? The Wonderful Works that Thou hast done, are They not a Sufficient Demonstration of thy Power! Do not the very Devils, in Spite of them, Confess it!

But Since These Madmen will not have thee Reign Over them, Come! Blessed Lord, and Establish thy Kingdom in me; Lay the Foundation of Thine Empire in my Soul, and

Self Last Washing them Rather thy [illegible] Let those, who do not Believe in Thee, Come down; and Rebel against Thee! But for my Part, O my God, I Acknowledge Thee, I Receive Thee, I cast my Self at thy Feet, I Submit my Self Entirely to Thee, Because I Know that Thou art, *In Truth my King*: Accept the Homage that I Pay Thee! Grant that I may be, for ever, Faithful to Thee; that I may Never Betray thee, Never More Abandon, nor Forsake thy Service.

They Accuse thee, also, of having forbidden *The Payment of Tribute unto Cæsar*: What Ridiculous Forgery is Here! Who was Ever more Exempt, O Lord, than thy Self, from This Duty and Obligation? But yet, Notwithstanding all this, thou didst Ever Conform to this Law: Thou didst Suffer thy Self to be Carried to *Bethlehem*, even before Thou Wast Born, in Obedience to *Cæsar's Edict*; and, to Pay Him, upon thy Coming into this World, the Tribute He Demanded of His Subjects: Thou didst Command St. Peter, to pay the Tax for thy Self and Him; and didst Declare it, as thy Doctrine and Opinion, to the Publick, that We Ought to *Render unto Cæsar the Things that Belong'd unto Cæsar*: Thus, they Loaded thee with False Accusations, O My Jesus! And thou didst not Reply! They Returned thee Evil for The good thou didst Them; Forgeries and Falsehood for The Truths thou didst inform them in; Iniquity for the Justice thou didst Maintain; And thou didst not so Much as Speak one Single Word in thine own Defence! Permit Me,

VIII.

Me, [illegible], O my Lord! to Speak the [illegible]

Hast Godlift thou denin the Goods of [illegible] who art *The Author*, and *Dispenser* [illegible] *Good Thing!* What Need hast thou [illegible] Those which are Paid to the Kings [illegible] Earth? Thou from whom they Derive all that they Possess; And who Hast delegated Power and Grandeur upon My account? It's True, that thou Requirest a Tribute of Me; but it is the Tribute of *My Heart!* [illegible] Me, under Pe[illegible] Pains, from giving that [illegible] whatever, but thy Self! If this be a Crime in Thee, O my Lord, and my King! the *Jews* were Innocent, and their Allegations True! But, this Tribute is Thy Due, upon the utmost Principles of Justice; O [illegible] God of My Heart! Since thou hast Purchased it, at the Expence of thy Most Precious Blood! And it is not Sufficient that I should Profane thee with the Fruits of it; I Offer up my Heart, itself, Whole, and Entire, unto thee! Lord! Suffer not any Creature, ever, to have the Least Share of it with Thee!

IX. In, Fine, These Sacrilegious Accusers say, that Thou art *A Seducer*, and a Disturber of The Publick Peace and Quiet; Thou, *O Sweet Jesus*, Who art *The* LIMIT OF GOD, and *The* PRINCE OF PEACE! Who Reconcilest us with Thy Father; Who Informest us in such a Sublime and Heavenly Doctrine;

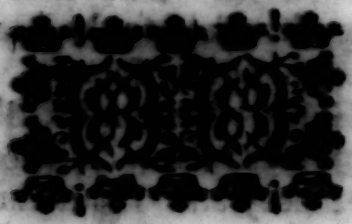
tion; who Purifiest and Refiner Our Faith; who Remembrest those [illegible] Sinners, which [illegible] Judgest upon the Law of God; who [illegible] us A Law full of Mercies and [illegible]; and who Remitest All Our [illegible] The Bond of Thy Laws: All Those that Will but hear Thee; And follow the Dictates of thy Divine Instructions, shall Certainly Enjoy a great and Perpetual Peace; And they who forsake Thee fall into Confusion, and Sorrow without Ceasing.

What Sedition, then, hast Thou Raised among the People! O my God! Thou hast Born All the Sins of the whole World; Thou hast Receiv'd Sinners; Thou hast healed the Sick; Thou hast Enlightened the Blind; Thou hast Pointed out the way to Heaven; And They Call Thee A Disturber of the Publick Peace! Blessed Wonders, O my Lord, and my God! for that Profound Silence thou did'st keep, Under so Evident a Calumny against The Sanctity of Thy Works, and the Unblemish'd Innocence of thy Life, by Suffering thy Self to be Condemn'd, In such an Ignominious Manner, as if Thou hadst been Guilty of the most Black and Aggravated Offences: How I Adore this Thy Heroick Patience, and That Excess of Love, which forces Thee to Undergo Every Thing thus, without Any Vindication of Thy Self! O when wilt Thou Kindle, In my Heart, this *Celestial Fire, which Thou hast Brought Into the World!*

O Most

O Most Holy Mother of God! who do'st Partake with thy *Well-Beloved Son*, in the Offerings He Makes; who Pleas'd for The *Matter* of *An Impostor*, and *A Malefactor*; And who art So Lively Sensible of Those false Accusations, with which They Blacken his Innocence; Assist me to Obtain, An Ardent and Sincere Desire of Being Like to Him! O Inspire me with Such true Ideas of This Blessed Qualification, that it may be All my Joy to Suffer for Him, as it will be the Greatest Glory of my Soul to Live with Him, Mortifications, and the Worlds Disgrace!

Ye Angels of God, who Behold This Truth; Ye Saints in Heaven, who have follow'd Him, Bless Our Lord In my Behalf! And Help me to Obtain The Grace to Comprehend, To Love, And Nevermore to Search after Any Other Glory, than That of Being, as Near, as Nature Will Allow me, Like This *Divine Saviour*, who is The Only, and Perfect Model of The *Predestinate* to Eternal Bliss. *Amen.*



THE

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THE Thirty First Instance OF THE SUFFERINGS OF Our Blessed Saviour.

CHAP. XXXI.

In His being Abandon'd, All Night, *to The* Insolence *of The Soldiers.*

THE Crimes, of which The *Pharisees*, and The Chief, amongst the *Jews*, Accused our Blessed Saviour, were So Manifestly False; And his Innocence So Notorious, that They, with Reason, fear'd They should not Gain their 1.

their Faith in his Condemnation; Either from the Pain, Or from Passion, Fear; And [illegible] Never any Conscious Dread upon them; Because they Carry their Own Defence along with them; So, Malice, On the Contrary, Fears it self Especially, when to Hide its Poyson, it Disguises itself, under the Appearances of Zeal and Religion: Its as Much afraid of the Light, as Innocence Desires it; It is Ever Distrustful and Apprehensive; and Thinks not itself Secure, even Under The Cloak of Vertue: Therefore it is Never Quiet; As it is Apprehensive of every thing, it is Every Moment, Contriving Fresh Stratagems to Defend it self: It Heaps up One Crime upon another; 'till it Comes, at Last, into the Most Horrible Excess; And Nothing is More True than that Expression of *Wisd. 17. *The Wisemen*, * *A Corrupted Conscience, Has always Cruel Thoughts.*

For This Reason it was, that the *Pharisees*, and the Chief Priests, Made Such great Application, and Took such Extraordinary Pains, to Destroy the Reputation of the *Holy Jesus*; And to Establish their Own; That they Cry'd down his Person, Every where, as well as his Life, his Doctrine, and his Miracles; And that they Resolv'd, at Last, by a Diabolical Malice, to Render Him Contemptible to the People: They Knew how

Fluctuat-

[illegible] III

[illegible] the Stream; and [illegible]

They had no Mean Confidence [illegible] Therefore, for One Blessed [illegible] II. as they saw Themselves [illegible] Person, they Insulted Him Openly, and They Treated Him, after so unbecoming a Manner, that the Vulgar Sort stagger'd in their first Sentiments Concerning Him; They Began to Think, that, if This Man, whom so very Holy as the World Talk'd of him, the Priests who were the Guardians of the Law of God; And the *Pharisees*, who Made Profession of an Extraordinary Sanctity, would Never have Treated Him with so Blasphemous worthiness as they did; That they Must needs have some Secret Reason, to Mistrust Him, after that Manner; and that, Probably they had found out Something, in His Conduct, which it might not be Proper, for Them to Publish to the World.

In Effect, this Stranger, of Their Conduct; For, from the Next Day, that very Rabble, that had Follow'd the Blessed Jesus, when He Thaumatur'd, with his Doctrine, and Ravish'd at his Miracles; And who had Hail'd Him as THE MESSIAH; Abandon'd Him so far, as to Join themselves against Him, with his Worst of Enemies.

Then

[illegible] Blessed, [illegible] [illegible] Mocked, [illegible] [illegible] Spitted, [illegible] [illegible] Scourged, [illegible] [illegible] Crowned with Thorns, [illegible] [illegible] Mock'd, [illegible] [illegible] Bow'd, [illegible] [illegible] Spitted, [illegible] [illegible] Smote, [illegible] [illegible] Buffeted, [illegible] [illegible] Blows, [illegible] [illegible] Fists, [illegible] [illegible] Sore Wounds, [illegible] [illegible] Blows, [illegible] [illegible] Set to Guard over Him, they were so outrageously Rude, as to [illegible] Precious Body with their Blows, [illegible] Fists on the Face, insomuch that His [illegible] Cheeks, were Swollen with the Bruises of their Fists, and His Reddish Hair Change'd into a Livid and Most Painful Complexion; They Tore off His Coarse Gown, and Plunk'd up those Consecrated Locks of Hair, which hung so Decently on his Shoulders; And, alas! all this Night, in the Dark; every Eye Might behold, so soon as the Morning Light appeared, the Direful Tokens of their Inhuman Indignities upon Him, the Night before; This Malicious Piece of Artifice, was also so Successful to them; that from Thence forward, they threw off even the Formalities in their Proceedings against His Divine Person, which were usual amongst them; And it Influence'd *Pilate*, the Roman Governor, so far, that He, not having any Other Intelligence Concerning the Sacred Person, Or Work of the Holy Jesus, than that He had Met with, from the Mouths of his Malicious Accusers, whose Evidence He had yet Cross-ed, and Declar'd Him Innocent of all They Laid to his Charge; was Notwithstanding Prevail'd with so far as to pass an Unjust Sentence against Him, not having Reflection

Enough

[illegible] Spittle of the Blasphemy [illegible] Spittle on the Face, also, [illegible] Hands of *Annas*; But He had [illegible] Guilty of *Blasphemy*, In That of [illegible] Every One Smote who should be [illegible] In Affronting Him, and Treating [illegible] Greatest Instances of Cruel[illegible] Tied His Hands Behind His Back; They put a Rope about his Neck; And They Bound Him fast, that He Might not turn away his Face when they Smote Him; They needed not to have troubled Themselves about That; For, after He had Inform'd us * That *To Him that Smiteth us on the One Cheek we should turn to Him the Other*; He, doubtless, was Resolv'd, to Confirm That Doctrine, *By His Example*, which He had Given us in Precept; And, that He did not Practise it, In the House of *Annas*, when He Received that Barbarous Treatment There, It was out of a Regard to *Our Weakness*, And that He would Afford us some Subject of Comfort, under the Extreme Repugnance We feel, upon the like Insults.

He has therefore, Informed us, by this Instance of his Conduct, that although we feel, within Our Selves, a most Lively Pain, when we are Abused; yet nevertheless we Ought to Avoid Impatience, and Choler, which is, Evermore, Offensive; And to Express, by Our Language, and all Our Outward Actions, a Sedate, and Christian Moderation: For such an Un-offensive Patience,

* St. Luke 6. 9.

[illegible] Glory! And we shall, at last, Rejoice Our Selves as Under a most Happy Blame, * *To be Deem'd Worthy to Suffer Affronts for Righteousness, and Sake of our Blessed Saviour*, and Redeemer, *The Lord Jesus Christ!*

* Acts 5. 41.

This Inhuman Treatment was Accompany'd with so Many Confused Out-Cries, such Injurious Revilings, and such Barbarous Instances of their Contempt and Scorn; that, to Imprint, in One, an Idea, of its Baseness and Injustice, we need only to Consider how Excessively Malicious The Hatred of The Jews was, against Our Blessed Saviour; or Rather, That of *The Devil*, who Instigated and Incited Them, to press Thus upon Him, at a Time, when He was Left alone, and had No Soul Near Him, By whose Authority or Presence, their Insolence and Cruelty could be Quell'd or Abated: † *He hath no Form Nor Comliness*, Says the Holy Prophet, *And we have Seen Him, A Man of Sorrows, and Acquainted with Grief: And His Face was Hidden, and He was Despised, Therefore We have not known Him*: Upon this Account it was that The Same Prophet has observ'd, a little while Before, That ‖ *No One would Believe what He said*; And that *The Heavy Hand of God, Laid upon his Son, was Inconprehensible.*

† Isa. 53. 2. 3.

‖ Ibid. v. 1.

The

The Countenance of the [illegible] was so very Beautiful, so Grave, so Modest, that it Drew Veneration, and Respect, from Every Creature that Beheld Him; And, as much as the Jews Hated Him, they were always Smote with some Secret Sentiments of Respect, whenever they did but Look upon Him: They knew, also, by their Experience, that He Could Pierce into the Bottom of their Hearts; And that He well Understood the utmost Secret of their Thoughts, having, Several Times, Discover'd them to them Themselves: And, therefore, that They might Glut Their Malice, with the more Liberty, They Shrouded his Face, And, after they had Smote him, most Unmercifully, And Buffeted his Face, They ask'd him, in a Jeering Strain, * *Thou Christ, Prophecy, unto us, who is He that Struck Thee?* Blessed God! What Malice! What Inhuman Outrage! What Execrable Indignity was Offer'd Here!

* St. Mat. 26. 67, 68.

He that Will but Compare The MAJESTY of This MAN-GOD, with the Baseness of Those Miscreants, who Abused the Holy Jesus, after This Manner, will be Only Capable of Admiration and Silence; Especially if He Considers the Patience with which *This* KING OF GLORY Underwent Such Intolerable Ignominies; And The Compassion He has, for Those very Wretches, who were the Accursed Instruments of All His Sufferings.

But, that which Ought to Heighten and Redouble Our Astonishment, is, that there should VII.

should be such Creatures in the World, that, to this Day, Foster an Opinion of Dishonour and Infamy, upon that Great Work of Our *Blessed Saviour*: And Here, I don't only Speak of the Right-Down ATHEISTICAL and INFIDEL GENERATION, who, not Acknowleging His Divine Person, pay no Regard to His Sufferings, as the True and only Means of Our Redemption; But Even Those Christians, who do Profess Jesus Christ, and Own His Bitter Passion to be the very Source and Fountain of *Eternal Bliss* and *Glory*: A Blow, In their Opinion, is so Intolerable an Affront, that it cannot possibly be wash'd off, But, by *The Blood* of Him that Gave it; And Expose themselves to the Hazard of their Souls Damnation, to Come at the Life of Him who Offer'd 'em Such an Injury; And yet, *The Faith*, which They Profess, And the Practice and Experience of All the Saints and Martyrs Teaches 'em, that it is Infinitely Advantageous to a Christian to Endure what The Blessed Jesus, Himself, has Undergone; That The Hopes of Eternal Bliss are Establish'd by Reproach and Injuries; And that CHARITY is Enflam'd and Purified, Thereby, Under The Idea's of The Suffering and Dying Jesus!

But Alas! Their Own Natural *Pride*, And the Vanity of The Opinions of The World, Blinds them to Such a Degree, That Neither The *Example* of The *Blessed Jesus*, nor The *Purity* of *His Doctrine* Can make Any Impression Upon them! They think it a Sufficient Excuse, to pretend Ignorance, and

Frailty,

Feeling, and Surprised, by Some Sudden Pre-
sumptions, and the Like; But, As They do
Acknowledge that Their Mistake, in this Mat-
ter, is Manifestly Contrary to The *Truth* of
The *Gospel*; To The *Law* of *God*, and The
Example of Our *Blessed Saviour*, which are
The Infallible Rule for us to Walk
by; In Vain do they Endeavor to Excuse
Themselves, under the pretence of Igno-
rance: Neither does the Suggestion of
Weakness and Passion Justifie them a Bit
more than the other; Since Reason will not
Allow of Such Excuses; Nor Even Any Sud-
den, or Un-foreseen Accident, However
Surprising it may be; Because, this Lays no
Constraint upon The Freedom of our Will;
Therefore This Blindness Can Only proceed
from The Malice of the Devil, The Corrup-
tion of our Will, and The Illusion and Per-
verseness of our Judgments, with which, The
Holy Suffering Jesus is Infinitely More Of-
fended, than with all the Outrages and Af-
frents they Offer'd Him, Throughout the
whole Course of His Passion.

He Declares this Expressly, where He says VIII.
* *Whosoever Shall be Ashamed of me and of my* * *St.* Luke.
Words, of Him Shall The Son of Man be Asham- 9. 26.
ed, when He Shall Come, In his Own Glory, and in his Fathers, and of the Holy Angels. And Certainly it is very Just, that Our Heavenly, Judge Should Deny to Receive those, with Him into Heaven, who are asham'd to do those Things, upon Earth, which He has Practis'd, in his own Person; who Have Prefer'd the *Mistaken Honours*, of this World, to the Glorious Imitation of Our *Heavenly King*; And who have

 Stop'd

[illegible] and the Truth of [illegible] taking to Heaven all Vanity of [illegible] Christian.

Furthermore as Our Christian Obedience [illegible] charges us from that Cruel Obligation which the Custom of the World imposes on us, of Washing off the Stains of Our Dishonour with the Blood of Our Brethren, we have Infinite Reason to pay all Possible Thanks to God for the Dispensation: Happy is The Man, who has Engag'd Himself, in Such a State of Life, in which There is no Other Glory to be Maintain'd but That of Jesus Christ; And who would not Stick to Offend Such Men, Even as are most addicted to the Vanities of this World, if they Should Refuse to Imitate His Divine Example, and Grow Impatient and Revengeful of Affronts and Injuries: But Those Persons who Have Devoted Themselves to these Worldly ways Ought Also to Remember, that Our Blessed Saviour will Never Dispense With Them, from the Observation of His Law; That He will not Accept their Excuses; And that, Although He has been so Meek and Patient, Even as to Bear all Sorts of Affronts and Injuries, upon Our Account; yet He will be no Less Severe to Condemn Those, who, Giving Themselves a Loose, to Follow the Examples and Wicked Practices of this vain World, of which we have been Speaking, Have Refus'd to Imitate Him, in his Resignation, and his Patience.

The Best Advice that can be Given to Those who, under the Provocations they Receive, find Themselves the Most Averse to

The

[illegible] Of This Chapter, [illegible] in the Footsteps of Almighty God, [illegible] with All Humbleness, as Sinners, According to the Dictates of the World; And, then, Afterwards, to Prostrate Themselves at the Feet, of the *Blessed Jesus*, and most Humbly to Implore, of Him, *The Grace*, by all those Bitter Agonies He has Undergone; That those very Affronts and Injuries, of His own, which have *Opened the Kingdom of Heaven to All Believers*, May Open Our Hearts, also, to the *Divine Light*; Disperse those Clouds of Mistaken Nation, in us; And Enable us to Resist the Torrent of Worldly Vogue, and those Fatal Maximes, that are so Impetuous Therein: the Heavenly Jesus, who has Born all those vile and Bitter Reproaches upon no Other Account than to Fix, in Our Hearts, the Love of the Divine Truths, He has Taught us, Will Accept Our Desires, And Effectualy Co-operate, within us, those Miracles of Patience, He Usually Worketh in his Saints.

A

Divine Contemplation,

Upon The Blessed Jesus his Being Abused to The Insolence of the Soldiers.

PERMIT me, O my Jesus, to Contemplate on The Beauty of thy Face, before it was Disfigur'd, by the Cruel Hands 1.

[illegible] Are [illegible] Why Cry? Pray for Love Thy Foes, and Thy Enemies, Bless of them that Curse Thee! Is it Possible Thou Pity Barbarous Wretches, Who dare To Stretch out Their Profane Hands to Deface thy Sacred Visage! Hide Them not, already, Suffered Almost Enough, O Lord, without the Aggravation of Them, upon the Object? O thou joy of my Soul! Don't Suffer them to Eclipse this Divine Beauty, Least those Souls that are Enamour'd, of it, And whose very Life and Essence is Wrapt up in its Embrace, should be no Longer able to Know, and Distinguish it.

O ye Inhumane Murderers! O Hearts more Harden'd than the Rocks! Did you but know who He is, would ye have Laid your Hands upon; Could you but Behold the Beauty you Deface, you would Soon change your Souls into Lambs, and your Cruelty into Love! But I must needs be very Hardent'd, and Insensible my Self, O Dear Redeemer, to see Thee Treated after this Manner, and not to Die, not to Feel my Heart to Burst, With Grief, at the Sight of Such a Horrid, and so Barbarous an Outrage! I see thine Enemies Blow, they are Glutting their Rage, and Satiating their Cruel Malice upon thy Divine Countenance; And, yet I am Alive; And my Eyes can still Behold those Other Torments they have Prepared for Thee!

[illegible] Crosby Upon me, Why dost Thou [illegible] to Hell, thy Country Village? Wherefore wouldst thou Suffer Thy to be [illegible] and Disgrac'd, from the very [illegible] of thy Passion? Is it Possible there should be any, Such Wretches breathing, who would Continue Harden'd against that Majesty, and that MAJESTY, that's So Immense and shining in it? But, the Truth out is, They are Touch'd with it, O Lord; And if they Hide it, 'tis to Hinder those Impressions of Veneration, Those Sentiments of Reverence it would Infuse Them with; And that they may Smile Thee Afterwards, with Less Regret, and Mortification! O How This is it, that Thou Art Mock, And Lady I Mock! Without Thy Cause Thou ever Have Displeas'd Thy Self, as thou hast done, so Such Cruel Outrage, and Shameful Treatment!

It's Here, O Thou Light of my Soul, that I Clearly see How far off I am from my Humility! Sometimes I am apt to say, In General, when my Heart is Touch'd with thy Reproaches, that there is Nothing which I am not Resolv'd to Endure for thy Sake; But when I come to a Strict Examination of The Matter, and to speak Sincerely, I acknowledge my Weakness before Thee, O my God, If I saw my Self upon the Point of Receiving

[illegible] Pride! [illegible] Pride [illegible] me; [illegible] Pride [illegible] of Wisdom, or I should never be [illegible] any Reformation of [illegible] Pride! Pride whence Proceeds This, O my God? Has Hereafter all my Humility Lies In my Branch, Reaching no Farther than a few Words, Whilst I am, In The Bottom, full of Pride!

But, as for Thee, O Divine Lamb! Because *Thou art Meek and Humble of Heart*; And thy Lowliness is Sincere, and True, and from the Innmost Soul, Thou Suffereſt in Silence; Thou Loveſt those that Hate and Persecute Thee; And thou Abandoneſt thy Sacred Visage to All the Confusion it is Covered with, to Deliver my Poor Soul from that *Eternal Confusion of Face*, That I Have Deserved! And I, for my Part, Proud of Spirit, and Swollen with Haughtiness of my Heart, after such an Example, have not the Courage, nor So Much as the Inclination to Produce *The Other Cheek*, to Him who Would Have given me a Blow: When wilt Thou Deliver Me from Pride, Within me, O My God! When Shall I Become Like to Thy Self, *Truly Meek and Lowly of Heart*?

III. Thoughts of The World Suggeſt Reason to me, to Kill the Man who Would Give me a Blow; And it is the Notion, among Mankind, That I should Infist More Upon A Punctilio of Imaginary Honour, Than the Life and Blood of my Neighbour! These

are

[illegible] Thee, for Thee, they will [illegible] Affronts [illegible] it from Their Hearts; [illegible] Crucifixe are thy Blessings to those of The World, O my God! Although I am [illegible] Provoking Thee, Thou Still hast Infinitely a Greater Regard to my Life and my Salvation than thy Glory! Thou Suffered thy Sacred Cheeks to be Bruised, without Complaining! Art thou, then My Slave, O thou my Sovereign Creator and Preserver! Will it not be Said that *Thy Love is Blind*? For, Who art Thou? And What am I? O *Strange Mystery! O Amazing Prodigy! O The Depth of The Wisdom*, and *The Charity of God*! O Thou Mysterious, Unfathomable Love, which Workest so Many Wonders, In The Heart of Jesus, Why Dost Thou Not Transform Mine! Is it Possible, that Thou Shouldst find, in Such a Worm of the Earth, More Reluctancy and Opposition to The Humiliations, thou Teachest in thy Practice, than in the Awful Majesty of Heaven.

I am ashamed of my Self, O Lord, when I Consider that they who use Thee so Unworthily, are not Savage Beasts, But Rational Men, of the Same Species with my Self; That I am a Son of *Adam*, as They are, Carry'd away by the Same Impetuous, Disorderly Affections, With Them; And Capable, as they, to Reject and Scorn that, thy Adorable Beauty, to Bruise thy Comely Visage, and to throw a Vail all over it, that I may have the Power to Affront thee with the Greater Liberty!

I have

[illegible] my Self, who [illegible] [illegible]! It's my Flesh that O[illegible] [illegible] Still I do not Hate it; I do not [illegible] my Self. But, on the Contrary, I Sooth, [illegible] Guilty, Sinful Body; And I Dont [illegible] my Self more than I Love thee, or thy Sacred Law.

When wilt thou Create in me, O Lord, that Change which thou Desireſt there! When wilt thou give me an Entire Abhorrence of my Self? when Shall my Soul be Abhorrent of *That Na*ture, which Being given up to its Own Licentious Inclinations, and Deprived of thy Grace, Could yet Capable of Committing Such Abominable Wickedness! O SWEET JESUS! O HOLY JESUS! Perfect that Blessed Work, within me, for which, with so much Patience and Meekness, thou hast Waded through such Prodigious Sorrows and Humiliations! For, if thou withdraw thy Helping Hand, I shall Grow into a Viler Wretch than those who have, been thy worst Revilers and Tormentors.

The hatred which they Bear against thee, O my Saviour, is so Great, that they Will Admit of Nothing, that might Shew the Perversness of their rage against thee! they Cover the Beauty of thy Countenance, Left they should be Charm'd, with it! Ah! Hide it not, from me, O Lord; Vouchsafe me a Sight, O thou Delight of my Soul, Let my Eyes Behold this Divine Visage, all Black and Blessed as it is! I Desire it, I Adore it, I am Enamour'd of it, in the Condition that it is; And the more Disfigur'd and Deface'd it is Become, for my Sake, it is so much the Dearer to my Soul!

I Perceive, thro' all that would hide it from me, those Charms that have Attacted my Soul unto it!

Forgive

[illegible] to Sin,
[illegible] Liberty! Many [illegible]
[illegible] dare not see me, that I [illegible] my
[illegible] in Infancy, and Grandeur, at [illegible] my
[illegible] Appetites, without any [illegible] or
[illegible]! Enlighten me, O thou [illegible] Glo-
ry! And make me to Behold, in the Ornaments of
thy Mansions, the Impetuous Irregularities of
my own Life.

When I Read thy Holy Gospel; When I hear thy Word; when I Consider What thou hast done upon My Account; Or, else, when Thou Ravishest My Soul, with the Blessed Impulse of thy Endearing Grace; And I find, by Inward Intuition, What thou art; What I owe thee; And What thou Requirest of me; Doth thou not Discover Thus the Beauty of thy Face make me, that I should Observe thy Law, and Let my Self be Won by thy Amazing Love! And When I will not hear thy Voice; When I Reject thy Doctrine, When I forget thy Mercies, to follow the Dictates of my own Corrupt desires; Do I not, then, Cast a Vail upon thy Enchanting Visage, Whose Brightness Would soon Scatter all my Clouds of Darkness, and Mistake! VI.

O Divine mercy! Couldst thou Bear with me, if thou Wert not Infinite! Forget, O Lord, all my Wretched Follies that are past; and Grant, for the Future, I may never Loose the Sight of Grace! That I may Evermore, Walk in Thy Footsteps; That I may be as Industrious to Seek Grace, as I have been, Hitherto, to Fly from thee; and Last this Moment put an End to my Blindness. Let not those Sins which I have Committed, to this Day, prevent thee, O my Saviour, from lift-ing up the Light of thy Countenance upon me, and softening the hardness of my Heart; thou canst Convert me, from this Moment, and Transform me Into

thine

[illegible]

[illegible] Glory, that I may be [illegible] Brightness; And, that my Soul, [illegible] of Sorrow, may melt and be dissolved [illegible] Love of thee! The Jews were afraid, to see the Face of *Moses*, when the Dishonoured Face of Humanity, Blushed * *They Could not bear the Brightness of that Glory with which it Shone, When Conversing alone with God*. And, [illegible] that *Moses* might Speak to Them, [illegible] God: But, those Happy Souls, that are in [illegible] with Thee, O my Redeemer, Charm'd with [illegible] Beauty of Immaculate Charity, desire Nothing [illegible] them so Enjoy the Musick of thy Voice, and [illegible] ly to Behold thee as thou art! They know [illegible] thing their Enemies, them of Sin, as [illegible] Entertainment; they Cant Bear any Interval Between their God and them; Nor may [illegible] Wall that might Prevent their full Prospect of the Enchanting Glories of thy Beauty!

* Exod. 34.

VII. *Moses*, who had the Happiness to Know thee, and who, Enflam'd with the Love of thee, [illegible] Constantly Panting after this Enjoyment; And was always Importuning thee, that Since thou didst Vouchsafe him the Honour of thy Presence, Thou wouldst also Condescend to Shew him so Much thy Face; Vouchsafe, [illegible] Power also, unto me, the most Unworthy of thy Creatures! For, I crave this Blessing, upon No Other Account but that I may know thee, the Better; Love Thee with a More Ardent Flame; And, find my Self more happily, Lost and Swallow'd up in thee! Fire thou my Heart, O my God, Ravish All the Powers and Faculties

[illegible]

[illegible] Lord, Sanctify [illegible]
That I May, Under a True Sense of my Own
Wretched, and Miserable Condition, Dispose
to That Apostle did, the Unhappiness of my having
[illegible]
[illegible] Account was Into the Number of Thy Sheep,
O and Charitable [illegible]
[illegible]
whatever Thou Art [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible] for Ever, Charm'd with the [illegible]
Divine Beauty, O *My Jesus, My Redeemer*, My
Supreme Felicity!